

# Fortean Times

ISSUE NO. 49

The Journal of Strange Phenomena.

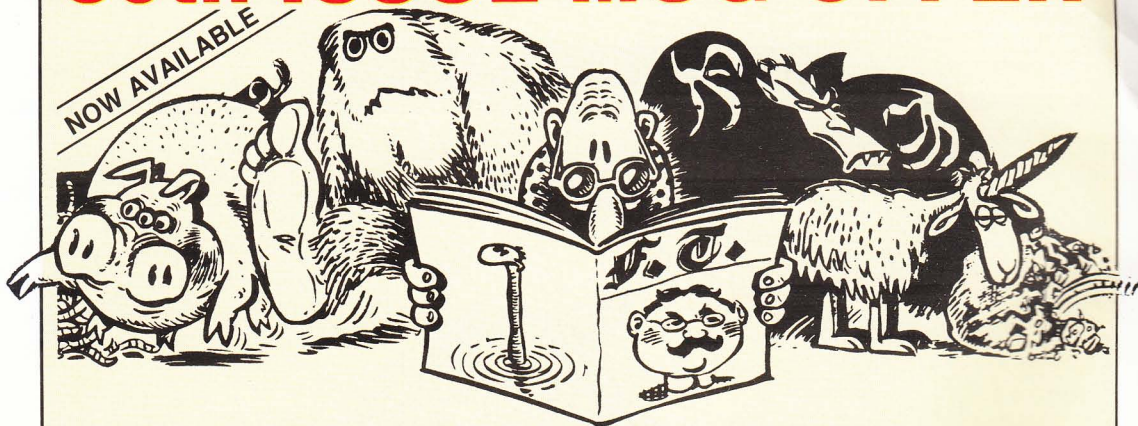
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96 Mansfield Road,  
London NW3 2HX, UK.

The Journal of Strange Phenomena.

Winter 1987  
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## FEATURES

- 36 **CRYPTOZOOLOGY CONFERENCE 1987.** A round-up by **Mike Dash** of the papers presented in Edinburgh.
- 40 **BRAZILIAN SPOOKLIGHTS.** Described by eye-witness **Cynthia Newby Luce**.
- 42 **THE RIDDLES OF OZ.** **Tony Healy** surveys the range of anomalous animal and humanoid sightings down under.
- 46 **ON THE TRAIL OF A 'TIGER'.** **Rex Gilroy** describes his hunt for the thylacine (Tasmanian tiger) in mainland Australia.
- 48 **TASADAY, TAUT BATU AND THUNDERSTONES.** Recently discovered 'stone age' tribes in the Philippines are not a hoax, says **Mr X**.
- 49 **SON OF A GUN.** The oddest story of human impregnation we've ever heard, from the American Civil War.
- 55 **CHEATING THE GRIM REAPER.** **Paul Sieveking** presents some cases of noose survivors and 'resurrections' from morgues and coffins.
- 61 **WHAT 'LAKE MONSTER TRADITIONS' MEANS TO ME.** Prompted by Michel Meurger's forthcoming book on lake monsters, **Bob Rickard** outlines the folkloric approach to supposedly 'naturalistic' data in historical fortean material.

## COLUMNS

- 41 **PHENOMENOMIX** by **Hunt Emerson**.
- 51 **ENIGMA VARIATIONS.** German war rumours in 1914 by **Nigel Watson**.
- 52 **RESURRECTIONS.** 'Isaac Martin's disappearance' and 'another mad gasser?' by **Michael T. Shoemaker**.
- 54 **STRANGE TANGENTS.** A fortean film sampler by **Mark Chorvinsky**.

**COVER** Painting by Fred Gambino for Michel Meurger's *Lake monster traditions*. ©

Drawings by **Merrily Harpur**  
pp: 5, 13, 17, 25 57

## STRANGE DAYS

- 4 **A WONDER FROM THE TUNDRA.** Entombed newts by **Bob Skinner**.
- 5 **RETURN OF THE TIGER?** **Bob Rickard** summarises the controversy around the recent photographs of a thylacine in Australia.
- 14 **DEAD SCIENTISTS: CONSPIRACY?** **Mike Dash** on the odd series of Marconi scientist deaths.
- 22 **A BIG HAND FOR THE COLOSSUS...** The daft episode of a medium and a lump of rock in Rhodes harbour by **Steve Moore**.
- 30 **CHRIST IN THE MOUNTAIN.** A story of Christ simulacra in Sweden by **Sven Rosén**.

▼ 7 fair cop ▼ 8 wild talents in the Ukraine  
▼ 9 breakfast surprise / A Wright Nutter  
▼ 10 the teleporting evidence ▼ 11 mark of the beast ▼ 12 feral news / dog rescue  
▼ 13 Graves zapped / the gnash of circumstance ▼ 15 building bridges ▼ 16 over-reactions / true grit ▼ 17 in hiding  
▼ 18 dragon burns China / gerontology update ▼ 20 iconoclasm dept. ▼ 21 flows of seafood ▼ 22 updates / the fatal kiss  
▼ 24 green rain over Moscow / youthful cosmos / stubborn weeds / spontaneous excavations ▼ 25 asking for trouble / lighting our darkness / vanishing cats / now you see it...  
▼ 26 synchronicity / leaping balls ▼ 27 Rhode Island sees red ▼ 28 voodoo rebels ▼ 29 to sleep... or not / Brazil flights  
▼ 32 polygrams ▼ 35 Flight 19? / Storsjön hunt / Thatcher omens.

## USUAL STUFF

▼ 2 editorial ▼ 3 letters ▼ 60 clipping credits / help! ▼ 68 reviews ▼ 75 truss fund  
▼ 76 classified exchange ▼ opposite: subscription information.

# Fortean Times

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Paul Sieveking

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Once more, on a wing and a prayer, we bring you an action-packed issue. From the USSR we have X-ray vision, torpid newts, a fire-boy and green rain; yowies, bunyips and thylacines from Australia; jack o' lanterns from Brazil; holygrams [a useful word coined by Ion Will] from round the world; a report on the cryptozoology conference in Edinburgh; near-death experiences, premature burials, mystery snipers, feral kids, an enigmatic plane crash in Egypt... and many other exciting items.

To mark the half-century of the *Fortean Society Magazine*, we reprint on p81 some items from the first issue. We aim to live up to what Tiffany Thayer said about Charles Fort's work: that it makes readers "think without ever telling them what to think... it encourages the curious to question, the prying to pry, the inquisitive to inquire." We study anomalies not merely for their entertainment value, but because they trigger mental aerobics and advance our understanding of the world. As some forgotten aphorist once said: "Society lives upon its averages and moves upon its exceptions".

## STRANGE DAYS

Several people have contributed to the STRANGE DAYS section this issue, and we would like to encourage more readers to write up topical forteana which falls within their particular field of interest or expertise. We could help with clippings. Let's be hearing from you!

## NEW PRICE POLICY

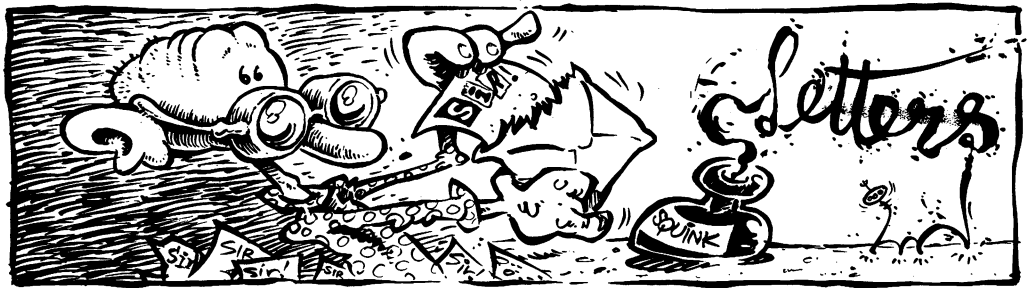
Do not be astonished by the new price on this issue's cover. We are getting more inquiries from shops and other retail outlets, and have had to set a new cover price to allow for their discounts. This is a retail price only - the subscription price remains as it was, except for a slight increase in the US price. Check our sub info page for further details.

## BACK ISSUES

Issue 40 is now out of print, as are all those before FT31. Our plans to reprint FT21-30 in book form have had to be delayed because of the large amount of capital that would be tied up. However, all of you who have written in to order a copy during the past few years will be notified as soon as we get moving on this. The first volume will be FT26-30.

Paul Sieveking





## GETTING THE BIRD

Being a reasonably experienced field naturalist, I have come across a number of inaccuracies in the wildlife material in FT. For example in FT42, p43, mention is made of a "Scandinavian wryneck, thought to be extinct in Britain, found in a Notts garden killed by a cat." The wryneck *Lynx torquilla*, although now virtually extinct as a British breeding bird (a few have colonised Speyside), is still a regular autumn migrant mainly on the south and east coasts. Individuals sometimes turn up on garden lawns looking for ants where they become easy prey for cats. Clippings taken on face value (this one from the *Daily Telegraph* no less!) lead one to speculate on the authenticity of other stories, particularly those from abroad.

Regarding the letter in FT43, p3, the apparent rise in UK rare bird sightings is probably explained by the rise in the number of 'twitchers' going out 'twitching'. This hobby (way of life?) has now reached epidemic proportions.

**James Havers**  
Crawley, Sussex

[Editor's note: we are always grateful for informed correction of material in FT. Once more we have to proclaim caveat lector – beware what you read. We are only as good as our sources – with no staff or budget, we cannot hope to

*follow up and check out more than a few of the events we report... by happy chance we sometimes have an observer on the spot, but most of the time we can only compare reports from different sources and draw on our knowledge of various types of phenomena. Enigmatic events are presented to us by the mass media as spectacle with a set of ready-made responses. A forteen approach cuts at the very root of all belief... as Fort would say, everything is real-unreal. What we can do is gather, corrolate, hypothesise in a non-reductionist frame of mind. PS.]*

...and speaking of Twitchers...

## DELAYED CORRECTION

About 10 years ago I wrote to tell you about a "green sparrowhawk" I saw in this town. This was an embarrassing error on my part for which I must apologise. It was, in fact, a parakeet, which lived wild around the police station for some years before disappearing.

**Alan Wills**  
Windermere, Cumbria

## A CHURCH OF FORT?!

John Nicholson's article, *The Politics of Prodigies* [FT48,p52] is, in a sense, to be welcomed: for it reminds us anomaly researchers to be as much on our guard against the anti-scientific wolf in sheep's

clothing within our fold as the scientific wolf without. Particularly when the pseudo-sheep himself cries Wolf. I don't know how serious he is in proposing a 'Church of Fort', but seeing some recent manifestations of cultism – the revival of possession / exorcism, the on-going channeling fad and the current outbreak of abducteeism being just three that come to mind – I don't find the joke, if joke it is, very funny.

Why he should equate the 'systematisation' and 'discipline' of forteen phenomena with political inflexibility is not clear to me. If we are to do more than stand in awed and unquestioning wonder before anomalies we cannot explain, we must find a place for them in our scheme of things: either in some metaphysical belief-system, or within the corpus of our scientific knowledge. Comparing what religion and science respectively have contributed to man's understanding of his place in the universe over the past three hundred years – or the past three thousand for that matter – I personally have not the slightest hesitation in opting for the scientific approach.

As for his claim that "Western science refuses to acknowledge the possibility" of forteen phenomena, this is just the kind of generalisation which is as dangerous as it is

**Continued on p80.**



## A WONDER FROM THE TUNDRA

Contemporary reports of entombed animals seem to be all but non-existent, so it seems all the more significant when a report appears in one of the more sober British newspapers, *The Times*, which describes the case as "one of the geological oddities of the century."

According to the Soviet news agency Tass, goldminers excavating at a depth of 30ft below the surface of the Siberian tundra region of Yakutia discovered a torpid newt which they were astonished to see revive and begin to move when put down in the sun. "It crawled slowly... on its five-fingered limbs, turning its head, with round bulging eyes, from side to side".

The miners took the newt to the geological department of their local mine, where it was kept for several days in a glass vessel before it died. The body was to be preserved and exhibited at the geological museum at Yakutsk, which also displays woolly mammoth remains found preserved in permafrost.

The fact that the newt is reported to have come from the same depth in the permafrost in which such remains have been found not unnaturally fuelled speculation as to the length of time the newt may have survived entombed in torpor. A Professor Nikita Solomonov, the director of the Institute of Biology at the Siberian department of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, is quoted as saying "Many species of salamander can remain in anabiosis [a state of reduced animation] in permafrost for tens,

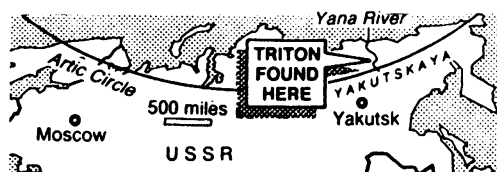
hundreds and even thousands of years and revive under favourable conditions". He stated there had been similar cases in Yakutia before.

If this startling claim of extended vitality in amphibians is substantiated, it would be of great significance to the study of entombed animals as a whole. However, scientists in the West have not yet been persuaded of the fact.

A more orthodox explanation for such cases was offered by an unnamed 'scientist' in the Natural History Museum in London, who recalled a similar case 15 years ago: "An animal was thought to have revived after thousands of years, but it was decided eventually that it had slipped down a crack in recent times into the permafrost layer and hibernated until it was recovered." [*The Times* 26 June 1987.]

It is tempting to accept this report from such a respectable newspaper source; is it possible, however, that this is an example of a Soviet contemporary legend? Previous reports from the USSR concerning the revival of newts excavated from the permafrost have appeared in the West, and at least one case has been shown to be questionable.

▼ On 27th February 1963 it was claimed on Moscow Radio that two four-toed 'tritons' (this archaic term tends to crop up in these reports) revived after being found in Northern Siberia "frozen in the ice" [permafrost?] at depths of 13 and 25 feet. Professor Lev Losino-Losinky, head of a cosmic laboratory at Leningrad, who was said to have stated that the newts had survived for about 5,000 years, later denied this, calling the story "pure fantasy". He said that experiments he had conducted which had attempted to maintain vitality in frozen living animals had all been unsuccessful. [*The Guinness Book of Animal Facts and Feats* by Gerald Wood, 1972, p207.]





▼ Another report appeared in 1973. An animal variously identified as a male triton of the species *Hynobius Keyserling*, or a 'uzoglub', was found 11 metres underground in the permafrost by geologists searching for gold in the Kolymskaya district of Siberia. In this case, the report was given its aura of authenticity by references to radiocarbon dating that had fixed the animal's age at 90 years (100 years in one report), and to a report on the animal from the Ukrainian Institute of Geochemistry & Mineral Physics given to a Leningrad conference, which is said to have claimed that previously it was thought that amphibia could not remain viable after being frozen in a state of anabiosis for more than 20 years. *Guardian* 21 Mar 1973 and *Pursuit* 6:3:61 (July 1973) which cites *Izvestia*. A report on this case appeared in *FT/The News* 6,p19 (1974), citing the Des Moines (Iowa) *Register* 5 June 1974, and *Novosti Bulletin* No 15103,5 of the same date.

What initially appears to be a further report from the USSR of the revival of a frozen amphibian appeared in the *Sunday Express* of 1st May 1983. However, as many of the details are so similar to those of the 1973 case, it is very possible, despite the different location given, that this report is either a story based on the same case by a copy-starved journalist, or a variant of a contemporary legend from the USSR.



▼ In the West there have been several accounts of the revival of frozen frogs and fish. One that is comparable to the Soviet reports concerned a frog found embedded in glacier ice in Yosemite National Park by a Dr D.L. Albasio, who is said to have stated that it had survived 1,200 years there. Attempts to investigate further have thrown doubts on the story, as further information was not forthcoming and no "Dr Albasio" could be traced [*Pursuit* loc. cit.]. Problems of language and distance make it difficult to say whether the Soviet reports are equally apocryphal.

Bob Skinner

## THE RETURN OF THE TIGER?

The 24 April 1986 issue of *New Scientist* contained an astonishing article based upon three of a set of five photographs which purported to demonstrate that the Tasmanian 'tiger' (*Thylacinus cynocephalus*) was alive and well and living in the wilds of Western Australia. The article was written by Athol M. Douglas, a retired Senior Experimental Officer of Perth's Western Australian Museum, and enthusiastically endorsed the photographs taken by Kevin Cameron, a tracker of Aboriginal descent, who brought them to him in February 1985. All the more surprising because the thylacine is generally believed to have become extinct on mainland Australia several thousands of

years ago, probably in competition with the dingo.

Not much is said in Douglas' article about the time and place of Cameron's encounter, but an undated newsclipping accompanying the article suggests that it happened in November 1985, while Cameron was employed by the Agriculture Protection Board to eradicate an unspecified and troublesome predator in the south-west of the state. The photographs were taken while the thylacine was digging at the base of a tree; its distinctive stiff tail and dark-striped rump can clearly be seen. It was so engrossed in its noisy digging that it did not hear Cameron's approach. Finally, at the fifth click of the shutter, it bounded

away into the dense forest.

Almost immediately came the allegations of fakery. Letters in *New Scientist* for 15 & 29 May, and 12 June, brought the objections that, upon comparison of the photos, the animal does not change position and that shadows on the tree indicate the photos might have been taken at least an hour apart. The suggestion was that Cameron had faked the scene with a stuffed specimen. Among other points of criticism were the fact that Cameron seems to have had time to put his rifle down for a scale and then step back to get it in view, and that he failed to snap the fleeing beast.

Only one letter refuted the allegation about the

shadows on the tree, but the damage had been done, and indeed notes to the effect that Cameron had been caught out appeared in a number of newspapers around the world. Douglas appeared on an Australian TV current affairs programme on 29 July, alongside a repeat of an interview with Cameron made the previous year, shortly after his encounter. Douglas was now on the defensive, seeming to accept the criticism of the timing of the photos but rejecting the idea of a stuffed animal. He said he still believes Cameron photographed a thylacine but has yet to receive a definitive answer from him about whether the animal was alive or not. For his part, Cameron was uncontactable, hiding behind lawyers as he did once before – but we'll come to that shortly.

Whilst I agree that there are some unanswered questions about these photographs, it seems to me that the critics are informed with a hostility that belies their 'objective' criticism. To begin with the three published photographs are all taken from different positions, beginning low and getting higher as the viewpoint moves to the right. It is true the animal seems motionless between views two and three, but in view one (with the gun) it seems to me that it and its tail are in a lower position (I have to admit this is so difficult to make out, that it is supposition on my part.) Secondly, the critics say that the shadow of the tree to the left of the picture falls differently across a clump of spikey grass in the middle distance and behind the animal. This could simply be an artifact of the change of viewpoint, and I would need to see convincing data before accepting that the shadows are



Two cartoons by Austin about the thylacine controversy from *New Scientist*.

about an hour apart.

The critics also take no account of the other evidence in Cameron's possession – casts of distinctively thylacine footprints made by both running and stationary beasts; photographs of animals killed the way a thylacine would kill and around which the tracks were found; and his own fund of facts about thylacine appearance and behaviour based, he claims, upon years of tracking them and several visual encounters. This evidence, as well as Cameron's "pride in his ancestry, his bushmanship, and his knowledge of Aboriginal culture," convinced Douglas. Douglas, who probably knew as much about the 'mainland' thylacine as anybody, having spent his professional life investigating and acquiring thylacine relics (including the

Mundrabilla carcase, which he thinks is much younger than its radio-carbon dating of 4500 years old) for the Western Australian Museum, and who was previously sceptical about its survival into modern times, questioned Cameron closely and intelligently before changing his mind. Thirdly, the 'mainland' thylacine is generally believed to have been a little smaller than its Tasmanian relative, so there may have been other small differences too; therefore criticisms, such as Cameron's animal not looking "very much like the one in Hobart Zoo", or that its fur looked "so smooth, so unreal" cannot be taken seriously from people who presumably know about morphic diversity within a species.

Against Cameron are several small points, but of the sort that the CSICOP-type critics like to make capital. Douglas himself delivers one, saying that Cameron was intelligent but illiterate until recently. It could be implied that Cameron then picked up enough information from books to fake the incident – but surely Cameron would have no need for such bookish sources when he had his own tracking experience and his cultural heritage. Secondly, it could be argued that Cameron was clever enough to set Douglas up, because an endorsement from a scientist of his stature would increase the sale value of the photos. Unfortunately, after his November 1985 encounter, Cameron announced but withheld his photographic evidence from the world's press, telling a reporter that they were "worth a lot of money and that he was negotiating with an overseas buyer," according to the unreferenced clipping accompanying Douglas' article.

But such a scam would be costly and full of risks – it is easier and more logical to accept that Cameron did indeed have evidence of thylacine survival, even if its existence in Western Australia conflicts with the prevailing dogma.

One facetious critic even suggested that “Cameron would serve his cause better by putting away his scruples and his camera and using his gun. Just one bloodied corpse would settle the matter.” Apart from the fact that Cameron had no wish to kill the beast – “I wanted to save it,” he said in that unreferenced clipping – Cameron was coming to the conclusion that a ‘bloodied corpse’ might settle matters in an altogether sinister way and to the thylacine’s disadvantage.

After Cameron came out of the bush with his photos and casts, his relationship with the Agriculture Protection Board (APB) worsened. He was angry about their refusal to “compensate me for my efforts”, and the fact that no-one turned up to examine the body of a thylacine-killed kangaroo which he had recovered and preserved in a freezer. (It had to be disposed of, consequently.) At the same time, he accused the APB and the Department of Conservation and Land Management (DCLM) of a conspiracy of silence to protect the lucrative bauxite mining in the area. If the existence of the thylacine were confirmed, said Cameron, it would have to be declared a protected species and the region would have to become a nature reserve, not to mention “rewriting the history books”. “It would cost the government a fortune,” he said. The government agencies had shown no interest in his evidence before his public outbursts; to the contrary, he



One of Kevin Cameron's photographs showing the striped rump and thick tail of the putative thylacine [*New Scientist* 24 April 1986].

fulminates, the government wanted the animal destroyed, and even gave him a Magnum to do the job. Douglas, in his article, mentions seeing a receipt for the gun. Government officials later offered to go with Cameron to the site, but his lawyers did not respond. “If Mr Cameron has a proposal to put forward he should approach the department,” a po-faced DCLM spokesman said. “If a Tasmanian Tiger was found in an industrialised area, the question would be whether the animal was safer there or elsewhere.” In view of the record of some governments for duplicity or sheer ignorance, and of the commercial lusts of Big Business, I don’t feel very reassured by this story.

It all seems like a classic conflict, with the objections coming from people who, as Douglas puts it, “prefer literature over personal observations”, and the history of cryptozoology is littered with

similar running fights. In this case, however, silence has triumphed. Since Douglas’ article and the rather jeering letters of comment there have been no developments. If Kevin Cameron knows more he’s not telling. If he’s that pessimistic about the outcome, who can blame him?

For other thylacine-related items see the articles by Tony Healy (on p42) and Rex Gilroy (on p46) in this issue.

**Bob Rickard**

## FAIR COP

# Christopher Logan, 49, charged with impersonating a policeman, escaped from Bow Street Court - by impersonating a policeman. *Sun* 10 Oct 1985.

# Police in Indianapolis allowed a woman accused of passing \$100,000-worth of bad cheques to post bail with a cheque. It bounced. *Scotsman* 12 Mar 1986.



## WILD TALENTS IN THE UKRAINE

The sombre pages of *Izvestia*, hardly renowned for sensationalist journalism, have been carrying some forteen crackers lately. Perhaps this is glasnost in action. The edition of 11 April 1987 reported on a Sascha K., 13, a schoolboy from Yenakiyevo in the Donets basin of the Ukraine. Clothes, furniture, carpets and electrical equipment burst into flames in his presence. According to his parents and other relatives, Sascha's talent, which had caused over 100 fires, first appeared in November 1986. It had ruined their lives and forced them to move from home – to no avail; they moved in with Sascha's grandmother, Lyudmilla Mikhlanova, but the fires came too.

Vladimir Korchenko, the chief physician of the hospital where Sascha was being kept, said that he is certain that the boy had some special power. "While he was in the hospital, the clothing of a boy who shares the room with Sascha suddenly caught fire." The Ministry of Internal Affairs had ordered an investigation. Anatoly Popov, head of the chemistry institute of the Ukraine Academy of Sciences, was on the case: "We investigated the things which were burned, trying to find the reason for all this. We know there are chemicals that can produce self-ignition. In the remains of some of the things, we found traces of this type of chemical, but there were many cases where we didn't find anything... The ash was absolutely pure, so we can't say anything definite."

Police officer Vyacheslav Chernov had the usual law-enforcement approach: "We suspect that there is a person, who for some reason or other,

arranged those fires. Our task now is to detect him, but today we only have suspicions." Clearly, a person of fiendish ingenuity and deviousness was at work... *Stars and Stripes* (West Germany) 14 April 1987.

A further *Izvestia* report, in the week of 18 to 23 May, gave more details. Sascha's presence made objects fly about and light bulbs explode. On one occasion, a refrigerator turned upside down. His father had a nervous breakdown and was hospitalised. He was brought to Moscow for a physical examination, but nothing out of the ordinary was found. One witness said a shoe flew off his foot and out of a window when the boy walked into a room. A physicist called Dr V.G. Andriakin announced that a poltergeist was at work, but then proceeded to offer two theories apparently at variance with this diagnosis: either the boy hypnotised people, leaving them momentarily dazed and unable to remember exactly what had happened; or he was able to project a kind of electrical energy that ignited gases in the air, causing fires. He predicted that such cases would become more frequent with the increasing amount of gases in the atmosphere because of pollution. *San Francisco Chronicle* 28 May, *The Record* (NJ) 31 May 1987, quoting the *LA Times News Service*. According to the *Weekly World News* (7 July), it was Gorbachev himself who had ordered news agencies and newspapers to give the story full exposure.

➡ On the back of the front page of *Izvestia* on 14 June 1987 was a remarkable story set in Donetsk in the Ukraine, about 25 miles from Sasha K's hometown of Yenakiyevo.

Former crane driver Mrs Yuliya Vorobyeva was pronounced dead at the age of 37 and spent two nights in a mortuary after receiving a 380-volt electric shock in a mine near Donetsk in March 1978. A doctor and his assistant began an autopsy, but with the first cut, blood started to pump out and she began to shake. She didn't sleep for six months after she regained consciousness; then she fell into a long sleep from which she emerged with new visual powers. For further resurrections see p55.

"One morning I went out to buy bread", explained Mrs Vorobyeva. "I got to the bus stop and a woman was standing there. I went up to her and suddenly I was paralysed with horror – I could see her intestines and straight through her as if she were a picture on a television screen." She also found she could see through asphalt roads to the soil beneath, detect ultra-violet rays from the sun, and predict storms. Dr Yeizhertin said that, within seconds of meeting him, she told him that his hearing was better in one ear and his right eye was weaker than his left. Dr A.Svedlerova said admiringly that the doctors at Donetsk hospital are not bothered by her competition with medical science because she diagnoses only rare illnesses, such as diseases of the pancreas, and "has never made a single mistake." She correctly told the *Izvestia* reporter that a red liquid in his stomach indicated that he had eaten 'kisel', a kind of starchy jelly. *Aarhus (Denmark) Stiftstidende*, *Telegraph, Guardian, Mail, Today, Sun* 15 June; *Der Fri Aktuelt* (Denmark) 16 June 1987.

➡ Three months before this

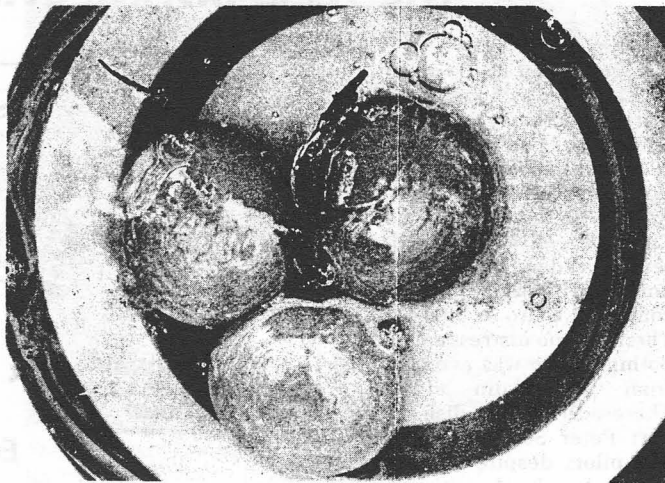
story broke, Jack Weyland, Professor of physics at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, gave a paper at a meeting of the American Physical Society pointing out 'impossible' physics in movies, including Superman's X-ray vision. "X-rays do not work the way Superman uses them" reported Joel N. Shurkin for the *Christian Science Monitor*. "His eyes would not perceive X-ray radiation from an object or a person unless something was emitting the radiation from behind." Tell that to Mrs Vorobyeva ! Belleville (IL) *News-Democrat* 10 Mar 1987.

Finally, we hear of over 100,000 people converging on the city of Grushevo in western Ukraine in one month after a rumoured appearance of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Back in April, according to the *Literary Gazette* (19 August 1987) a girl of 10 told her mother that she had seen the figure of a woman on the balcony of the village chapel. Said the mother: "I realised that it was a miracle - that it was the Virgin Mary." By the time the story had travelled a few miles people were saying that the girl had been born dumb and had miraculously spoken for the first time on seeing the vision.

The village was well known as a place of pilgrimage, the chapel having been built over a spring believed to have holy properties. The Ukrainian Catholic church was officially absorbed by the Russian Orthodox in 1945, but continues to exist clandestinely. The writer of the Russian report said that a local party official had shown him that by staring at stains on the chapel roof it was possible to see in them a woman's face. Thus all was explained, wasn't it? *Telegraph* 6 + 20 Aug 1987.

See HOLYGRAMS on p32 for more on holy simulacra.

## BREAKFAST SURPRISE



The gecko emerges from a freshly-broken hen's egg.

In a timely footnote to Bob Skinner's survey of creatures found inside eggs [FT47, p46] we offer the following case of a 60 mm gecko, or night lizard, hatched from an ordinary hen's egg.

Greg Bliss of Bundaberg, Queensland, Australia, had bought a dozen eggs from the local store, and they had been in his fridge for four days. He had not adjusted the heat to incubation temperature. Planning an omelette, Mr Bliss had cracked some eggs into a mixing bowl. One of them yielded the gecko which immediately began to scurry about in the egg white. He had trouble believing it was really happening and called over his neighbours, Troy Weule and Sonja Conroy. Mr Bliss opened every egg he had in case the geckos had spread; but there was only one. The surprised trio called on the aid of Dreamtime reptile Reserve curator, Peter Richardson, who identified the creature.

Ray Byrnes, director of the Department of Primary Industries, pig and poultry branch, said from Brisbane that he had no record of anything like it happening before (he should read FT!) He said that a hen's egg took 25 to 26 hours to form. The yoke was shed from the ovum and travelled down the oviduct. Several layers of egg white were secreted onto the yolk until, at the final portion of the oviduct, the two layers of membrane were added. Then there was a 15 to 16 hour period when the shell was deposited and hardened. *Bundaberg News-Mail* 16 Feb 1987.

## A WRIGHT NUTTER

Bride-to-be Ann Wright is resigned to becoming A. Nutter when she weds. But she has vetoed fiance Jeremy Nutter's plan to combine their surnames by deed-poll - and make her A.Wright-Nutter. Ann, a receptionist from

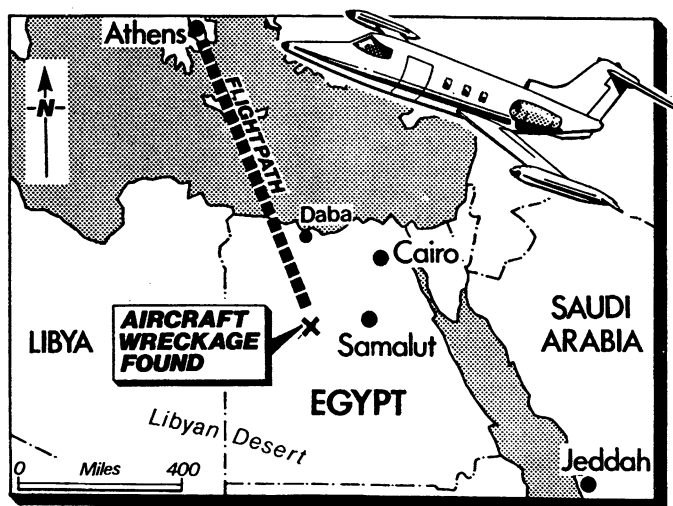
Marple Bridge near Stockport, met Jeremy at an April Fool's Day party in 1983... and she thought his name was a leg-pull. He is proud of the Nutter name, however, which means scribe. *D.Mirror, Sun, D.Express* 19 June 1987.

## THE TELEPORTING EVIDENCE

Odd goings-on in the desert... A Lebanese shipowner, his British secretary and three others vanished on 11 August 1979 while flying over the Egyptian desert en route from Athens to Jeddah [see map]. Their Learjet was tracked on several radars and had four hours of fuel left when it last contacted Cairo at 5pm GMT. There was no distress call, and nothing more was ever heard from Ali El-din al-Bahri, Theresa Drake, Swedish oil expert Peter Seimer and their two pilots despite a massive search by the Egyptian and Saudi air forces along the plane's flight path. The Al-Bahri family spent a further £1 million on the hire of private aircraft to carry the search as far as Kenya.

At the time it was commonly assumed that the Learjet had been hi-jacked or forced down by Libyan MiG fighters as part of an attempt to prevent a £160 million oil and arms deal between Syria and the Lebanese business magnate. Mr Al-Bahri's sons spent £3 million exploring this line of enquiry, and his wife and mother advertised widely in the Arab press, offering up to \$10 million for his release.

The usual spate of rumours followed – a Swiss pilot had seen the jet on a remote Libyan airstrip; Lord Chalfont, a minister at the Foreign Office, said he thought the plane had been “hi-jacked by a couple of MiGs and forced down”, the passengers being held captive; Theresa Drake's service with the Army in Northern Ireland was investigated. After the disappearance, her parents received a few personal belongings – photographs – from her employers; in 1981



their house was broken into by “very professional” burglars who removed the photos and a watch but ignored £15,000 worth of jewels and £1,000 cash.

Strangest of all, though, was the recent discovery of the wreckage of Al-Bahri's Learjet. It was found in February 1987 by a team of archaeologists, 270 miles south-west of Cairo. The fuselage had landed intact and there had been no fire. One of the plane's wings was found a mile away from the main wreckage. Bedouins had discovered the jet two years earlier and stripped its interior, but at first there seemed to be no sign of the plane's occupants. Closer examination revealed quantities of crushed human bones piled on the floor of the aircraft. The largest was “no bigger than a thumb”, said Theresa's father, Tom Drake.

Osteologist Prof. Michael Day of St Thomas's Hospital, London, said that human bones should remain almost intact in such a sheltered location. “In eight years they

would certainly not have begun to disintegrate. Even wild animals would not have left such tiny fragments,” he commented. Add this to the fact that the Learjet was found on its predicted flight-path, in an area which had been “extensively searched” in 1979 and you have a pretty little mystery. D.Telegraph 6 July 1987

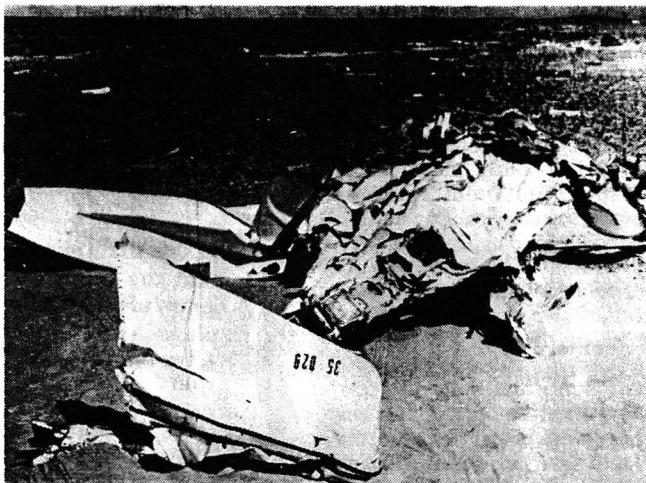
● We are reminded of the equally-odd case of Azaria Chamberlain, the ‘Dingo baby case’ girl killed at the sacred Aboriginal site of Ayers Rock on 17 August 1980. Her mother was at first believed when she claimed that a dingo had seized her daughter and made off with the child, then convicted of Azaria's murder when a court heard that bloodstains on the baby's clothing were consistent with her throat being cut but not with animal predation.

In February 1986, however, climbers searching for a British tourist who had fallen to his death from the Rock found the baby's bloodstained jacket – a garment the

prosecution and police had denied even existed – “in a spot where the husband and wife could not have dumped it”. Lindy Chamberlain was subsequently released from Darwin prison – where she had served three years of a life sentence – and given a free pardon.

This vital piece of evidence turned up *six years* after the ‘murder’ in an area subjected to several intense police searches. In some accounts it was said to have been found only 150 yards from the spot where the Chamberlain family were camping. *London Evening Standard* 2 June; *Sunday Times* 7 June 1987.

Mike Dash



The wrecked Learjet discovered in February 1987  
[picture by Al-Ahram, *D.Telegraph* 6 July 1987.]

## MARK OF THE BEAST

▲ Peter Bowen, a disciple of Lyndon LaRouche, and unsuccessful candidate for governor of Missouri, made an astonishing speech to an increasingly angry audience of students at McKendree College, Lebanon. After attacking rock music for stimulating “sexual frenzy”, sheep for spreading AIDS by coughing, Buckingham Palace for holding “homosexual parties upstairs”, and the FBI for framing LaRouche followers in a credit card fraud scandal, he climaxed with the statement that the mark on Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev’s forehead was the “Satanic mark of the Beast” mentioned in *Revelations*. His proof? “Gorbachev insists that he always be photographed wearing a hat.” *St Louis (MO) Post-Dispatch* 16 Oct 1986.

▲ A public protest in Athens by 3,000 Orthodox Greeks carrying placards with slogans reading “No to 666” and “Down with the effrontery of the Antichrist” has forced the Greek government to rethink its policy for the coding of new identity cards, which were to begin with the number 666 in a bar-code. The protest was backed by the Greek Orthodox Church, who said the number represented the ‘Beast’ prophesied in the New Testament *Revelations*. Archbishop Afxentios of Athens, head of a “breakaway” Orthodox sect, said the numbering scheme was planned by “dark forces”. *D.Telegraph* 4 Dec; *Independent* 12 Dec 1986.

▲ In view of the general paranoia about 666, the next item gives us a little buzz of ap-

prehension. According to an article in the French computer magazine *PC Informatique* (Nov 1986), if you can look into sector 20, address 115D of the database *dBASEIII+* installation program *INSTALH.COM* you will get the message “d:BEASTSGN.666”, which understandably evokes fears of some kind of satanic conspiracy. However, this is not a file created by dBase makers Ashton Tate, but apparently created by the software copy protection program Softguard, which is intended to prevent piracy. In much the same way – so the story goes – attempts to make illegal copies of the word processor *Word*, are blocked by the screen message: “The Shadow knows, crime doesn’t pay.” The report alleges that some worried users, including a church, have refused to use programs with this protection method, and that Softguard have promised to release a ‘lay’ version. Using *PC Tools* I can verify the fact that (more correctly) “d:BEASTSGN.666” does indeed lurk in the depths of the *INSTALH.COM* program of my *dBASEIII+* disk, but what it does I cannot (dare not?) imagine. (The mind boggles at the idea of ‘sleeper’ programs which might in future be activated by an awesome demonic computer-intelligence.) Can anyone enlighten us?

Rapid advances in computer hardware, software, and machine intelligence have generated a lot of modern folklore of their own, and we shall undoubtedly return to the subject.

Bob Rickard



## FERAL NEWS

# Indian wire services carried the story of a two-year-old girl captured in mid-May 1986 by loggers in a forest 50 miles south of Jansi in north-central India. She was found, naked with long matted hair, slumped over a fatally injured female panther, and the loggers took her to a village medic called Jayanti Banswal, thinking that she was lost and perhaps retarded. She was in reasonably good physical condition, but the only sounds she made were growls. At rest, she would hunker down, letting her hands and forearms drape to the ground. Banswal contacted Dr Devendra Ghosh, head of the department of special education at a Delhi clinic, and widely considered one of India's leading authorities on early childhood behaviour, who took the wild child in.

"It's truly remarkable," he told reporters. "You would expect that she might be fearful of humans and terrified by their technology. In fact, she is wary but not afraid. And her vocabulary after just two months is already 20 words." She was due to remain at the clinic for at least six months. Otis Daniels, writing for the *Weekly World News*, 8 July 1986.

# A year later, Australian police were trying to trace the identity of a naked mud-caked teenaged girl who had been encountered in 1984 by Trevor Young and his wife. They were sitting by a fire managing a checkpoint for a car rally when she emerged from the trees, led them off the track and pointed to a water hole. She told them that was where she slept. The reason for the current police interest is the discovery of a girl's skeleton in thick bush 700 miles north of Sydney on 12 July 1987. Bracelets and rings on its arms



The Indian panther girl.

and fingers were similar to those worn by the forest girl. *D.Mail* 15 July 1987.

# The Chinese girl brought up by pigs (FT45 p46) has returned to 'normal life' after three years of special training according to the Xinhua news agency (27 Aug 1987). Wang Xianfeng, 13, (*not* 'Cho-Lee' as stated in our previous report) has learned to read 600 Chinese characters, count to 100 and sing children's songs.

Her mother is mentally retarded and her father deaf. She had first been tested by psychologists in 1983, when she had no conception of sexes or colours. *Arab News* 11 March; [AP] Cleveland (OH) *Plain Dealer*, *Guardian* 28 Aug; *Le Dimanche*, Mauritius 13 Sept 1987.

# 'Robert', the Ugandan monkey boy (FT47 p19) is still alive in the Naguru orphanage in Kampala, though he is deaf and cannot speak. In 1982, at the age of three, he was left for dead in the Luwero triangle 50 miles from Kampala, when

Obote's soldiers were looting and murdering their way through the area. Three years later he was found in a clearing by soldiers on a route march. A group of Vervet monkeys, jabbering with excitement, scattered as they approached. One adult female remained, threatening to attack as they neared her. She was protecting a small bundle - a human child. He weighed just over 19 pounds, his toenails and fingernails were broken and overgrown and his teeth formed awkwardly in four separate rows. His diet of fruit and berries had failed to dislodge his milk teeth, and his secondary teeth had grown from under them. For four weeks his life hung in the balance, with violent bouts of vomiting and diarrhoea. Now aged eight, he has been toilet-trained, has learned to walk with an ambling gait, and sleep in a bed.

Of the 72 children in the orphanage, he has found a link with only one: Julius Bogere, 11, abandoned during the war years. He sits for hours with Robert, holding his hand or helping to wash and feed him. *Mail on Sunday* 11 Oct 1987.

Paul Sieveking

## DOG RESCUE

Mrs Beryl Lynch, 69, of Marlborough, near Dartmouth in Devon, who suffers from the brain disease encephalitis, disappeared in May 1987. Helicopter searches failed to find her, and a week had passed when Sgt. Ken Biggins from Torquay police and his Alsatian, Floyd, were out tracking for the fourth day. Floyd kept leading his master further and further off the path through a thickly-wooded slope high above Dartmouth.

"I couldn't believe that an elderly person could have got into such an inaccessible

spot, so I kept calling him back", said the sergeant. "But he was adamant and wouldn't take no for an answer. Finally I saw this tiny bundle covered with ivy and stinging nettles. Floyd started barking and I heard a tiny voice. I was amazed and delighted to find she was still alive." Said a relieved husband Frank: "she had been living on leaves and things during her ordeal. It's a wonder she didn't poison herself." She was lucky the weather was mild too. *Observer* 24 May; *D.Telegraph* 25 May 1987.

More rescues by animals, next issue.

## GRAVES ZAPPED!

Graves Thomas, 40, an attorney from Shreveport, Louisiana, was trying out his new boat with four friends on Lake Bistenau on Memorial Day (25 May 1987). The initial AP report said that he raised his hands, looked skyward and declared "Here I am" just before a lightning bolt struck him dead. There was no thunder, lightning or sign of lightning before the bolt struck, said Dan Russell Jr, one of the friends in the boat. The report had local churches bombarding police with inquiries about the apparent instance of divine retribution. Russell then declared that the lawyer's last words were directed at his girlfriend, who was nearby. "He didn't even look up". There was a twist, however: Thomas had been working on the case of a man accused of recklessness in a boating accident which killed three people on the very same Louisiana lake. *Attleboro (MA) Sun-Chronicle* 27 May; *D.Mail* 28 May; *Independent* 9 June 1987.

See also **LIGHTING OUR DARKNESS ON p25.**

## THE GNASH OF CIRCUMSTANCE

☛ Marion Ferguson, 42, a part-time shop assistant from Aughton, Lancashire, was walking past the offices of Swinton Insurance Company in Ormskirk in February 1983, when a heavy sign advertising accident insurance fell on her, breaking four ribs and cutting her head. She needed eight stitches in the head wound and three weeks in hospital. In June 1987 she won £6,800 compensation in the Liverpool High Court. *Liverpool Echo*, *D.Express*, *D.Mirror* 11 June 1987.

☛ Rob Manes, who works for the Kansas Game Commission and teaches hunters how to bag game safely, was accidentally shot (not fatally) – by another safety expert, Gene Brehm. Manes was wearing an orange cap with 'Kansas Safe Hunter' printed on the front. The accident happened near a town called Pratt. *News of the World* 15 Feb 1987.

☛ Postmaster Kobus Slabbert was warning children not to swim in the Zambesi because of crocodiles, when a gigantic crocodile grabbed him by the leg and dragged him into the water. Rescuers in the Caprivi Strip, between Botswana and Zambia, abandoned a search for his body. *D.Mirror* 13 Oct 1987.

☛ Anthony Galati, who was making a film about the importance of wearing a seat belt, suffered serious head injuries when he lost control of his car in Los Angeles. He was not wearing a seat belt. *Independent* 19 May 1987.

☛ Repairman Larry Collins said he was bitten, kicked and trampled by an ostrich-like creature while fixing a sign at the Benedict Bird Ranch in Sacramento. The owners said the claim was ridiculous. The sign he was repairing warned of dangerous birds. *S.Express* 22 Mar 1987.

☛ The manager of High Marnham power station on the River Trent decreed that a special flag should be flown to mark the 100th accident-free day, "our best effort for years". A security guard was hoisting the flag when the pulley wheel clattered down twenty feet and hit him on the head. *D.Mirror* 30 Sept 1987.

☛ Edith Webster, 60, was playing the grandmother in a performance of *The Drunkard*, a spoof of an 1844 play commissioned for a women's temperance group, at the Towson Moose Lodge in Baltimore in November 1986. She had played the role for eight years. After singing several robust choruses of "Please don't talk about me when I'm gone", she collapsed on stage for her death scene. There was tremendous applause from the audience of more than 200. Hearing that, she died, of an apparent heart attack. At first the audience thought that the calls for a doctor were part of the script; when they realised what had happened they sat quietly for almost an hour, and many prayed. St Paul (MN) *Pioneer Press Dispatch* 24 Nov 1986.



## DEAD SCIENTISTS: CONSPIRACY?

The story of ten British scientists involved in the defence industries occupied the attention of the British press between March and June this year (1987).

Eight died in circumstances suggesting suicide. One vanished and the last survived a 60ft fall onto a railway line. Conspiracy theorists had a field day when it was revealed that most of the dead men had been involved in secret research work for the Ministry of Defence. Five worked for the Marconi electronics company and several had links with the Stingray torpedo programme and anti-submarine warfare. We tabulate:

● **5 Aug 1986** – Vimal Dajibhai, a Marconi computer employee working as a junior software engineer on the Stingray project, dies after jumping from the Clifton suspension bridge, Bristol. 24yr-old Dajibhai lived in London, had no connection with Bristol, and no apparent motive for driving there to kill himself. Some reports say that small puncture marks were found on his buttocks. Verdict: Suicide.

● **28 Oct 1986** – Marconi analyst Ashad Sharif, 26, found dead in his car on Siston Common, Bristol. He had driven from his home in Walthamstowe, in London, and apparently committed suicide by tying a tow-rope to a tree, leading it through his car window and wrapping the other end around his head. He then put his car into gear and moved off, breaking his neck. Police reports suggested that he was depressed. A tape-recorded 'suicide note' was also found; in it, Sharif spoke about "dishonouring my family". Police decided there was no link between his death

and that of Dajibhai (above). Verdict: suicide.

● **4 Jan 1987** – Richard Pugh, a computer consultant for the MoD, dies in his Essex home with a plastic bag over his head. Verdict: accidental death.

● **8 Jan 1987** – PhD student Avtar Singh-Gida, a friend of Dajibhai, disappears during a field trip to a Derbyshire reservoir. He was working on sonar research for the MoD. Police frogmen search the reservoir without success.

● **? Jan 1987** – Royal Armaments computer expert Dr John Brittan dies of carbon monoxide poisoning. Verdict: accidental death.

● **22 Feb 1987** – Peter Peapell, 46, a lecturer at the Royal Military College of Science, found lying under his car in the garage. He had died of carbon monoxide poisoning. Peapell was a metallurgist specialising in Soviet advances in Beryllium technology; the metal is used in nuclear reactors. Open verdict.

● **? Feb 1987** – Marconi design engineer Victor Moore dies of a drug overdose. His job was designing night-sights for the army. His wife told police that he had been under "enormous strain" at work, had developed ulcers and then been turned down for early retirement, being given three months' notice instead. Verdict: suicide.

● **30 March 1987** – David Sands "commits suicide" by loading his car with petrol and driving it at speed into the side of a disused Little Chef restaurant near Basingstoke, Hants. The 36 (or 37, or 38)yr-old scientist was incinerated in the fire. He had been working on air defence for Marconi's sister company

Easams. His wife and colleagues said he had been "acting strangely" for days. The Coroner's Court noted that the circumstances clearly excluded foul play, and a police spokesman said there was no reason to connect Sands' death to any other incident. Open verdict.

However, our files show that this identical method had been used just three months earlier when, on 29 Dec 1987, Kent restaurateur Oscar Rudolph smashed through the glass front of Frogs eaterie in Canterbury in a Volvo. The ensuing explosion caused £500,000 worth of damage.

● **14 April 1987** – "Marconi defence boffin" Robert (some sources say David) Greenhaigh, 46, survives a "suicide leap" from a Maidenhead railway bridge. He lands on soft grass by the tracks and is spotted by the driver of a passing train. A wallet and unusual red ID card were later found nearby, and classified NATO documents were removed from his car. Greenhaigh was an account manager with the defence division of British computer giant ICL. Police were treating the case as "straightforward", but press reports suggested a link with the alleged double agent Dennis Skinner, thought to have been pushed to his death from a Moscow flat in 1983. He and Greenhaigh had worked together for 15 years.

● **24 April 1987** – Computer software designer Mark Wisner, 25, found dead in his bachelor flat after failing to turn up for work at RAF Boscombe Down. His head was wrapped in a plastic bag, and he was wearing women's boots, a corset and a black PVC tracksuit. Friends said that Wisner, who worked on Tornado

avionics, had "been plucking up the courage to step out into the street dressed as a woman. It was a lonely existence for him." This death – the eighth – ends the sequence.

## EXPLANATIONS?

Although this succession of bizarre incidents aroused considerable concern (amounting almost to hysteria on the part of some tabloids), the police and defence authorities seemed certain that there was no sinister link between the cases. Others remain unconvinced: several MPs called for urgent inquiries, and there were dark rumours about KGB plots.

In retrospect, conspiracy seems unlikely because most of those who died were rather low-ranking scientists, and several of the suicides were in ways in which it is difficult to imagine a third party being involved.

One mystery was cleared up when Avtar Singh-gida, the vanished sonar scientist, was discovered in Paris in late May, working in a down-market boutique in the city's red light district. He

revealed that he "just walked off to get away from things... The pressure had been building up over the past few months and I had been working very long hours." Singh-Gida said that his work was not secret, or even particularly original: "I was amazed at some of the words used to describe my work," he commented.

We seem to be faced with an intriguing series of coincidences. But why should two of the dead feel constrained to drive from London to Bristol to kill themselves? And why do three of the deaths (Dajibhai, Sharif and Sands) mirror those of characters in 'The danger makers', a 1965 episode of the old spies 'n' skulduggery series *The Avengers*? Answers on a postcard, please...

Sources: *Sun* 30 Oct 1986 + 30 March 1987; *D.Telegraph* 30 Dec 1986 + 19 Mar, 6 April, 23 May 1987; *Observer* 22 March 1987; *Bristol Eve.Post* 6+19+24+31 March, 21+28 April 1987; *D.Mail* 1+16+30 April, 23 May 1987; *S.Mirror* 19 April 1987; *D.Post* 6 April 1987; *S.Today* 19 April 1987; [AP] Houston (TX) *Chronicle* 10 May 1987; *Independent* 2 June 1987.

Mike Dash

## BUILDING BRIDGES

Here's a new category of occult crime: the felonious stealing and carrying away of bridges. We have two cases, one from Gwynedd and the other from Uruguay, both dated late in July 1987.

● As part of a job-creation scheme, Gwynedd county council ordered the construction of a wooden footbridge over the River Penrhos, between Pwllheli and Llanbedrog in North Wales. The £1,200 bridge was completed on May 11; at the end of the month its remains were found on the river bed. According to our source, the *Guardian* 23 Jul 1987, "it had not fallen, it had been pushed."

The council got tough. At a further cost of £1,500, they replaced the wooden structure with a steel bridge weighing several tons. It was a real beauty, 18 feet long and fitted with gates at either end. At the end of July it vanished – disappeared and could not be found. "It isn't often we have to investigate the theft of a bridge," remarked Detective Chief Inspector Irfon Evans, predictably. "The bridge was bolted together," confirmed a police spokesman. "It would have to be dismantled, loaded and carried away... obviously it would have needed a heavy vehicle." Dark rumours blamed local landowners who had opposed the project.

● We could accept that explanation, but consider this: in the *Independent* of 24 July 1987 one can read of the disappearance of a 160-foot iron bridge which spanned the Santa Lucía Chico river where it flowed through the town of Florida, Uruguay. Not a bolt was left behind.

Maybe there's an urban renewal project under way on Genesistrine.



The long search is over! Photographed by a reader some miles outside Cape Town in January 1984.



## OVER-REACTIONS

A 29-year-old admirer of Imelda Marcos stabbed his 35-year-old brother to death and seriously wounded a drinking companion during an argument over whether Mrs Marcos was prettier than the Princess of Wales, the Philippine news agency reported on 12 June. *D.Telegraph* 13 June 1987.

■ Reuters relayed an item that appeared in the Philippine *Daily Inquirer* and rang a distant bell. Two men were shot dead when they argued that the chicken came before the egg. Two proponents for the egg coming first took out their pistols and shot the men after one of them, thinking his view had won, made an obscene gesture. *Middlesbrough Eve. Gazette* 8 June; *Independent* 9 June 1987. More details were given in *The Orcadian* (11 June). The victims were Georgio Santos and Tomas Ja, barbers from the town of Tamban, and the gunmen were Jose Martas and Francisco Ferre. In this version, Tomas Ja cried out: "You are fools! What I say proves that the chicken came first!" No mention of an obscene gesture.

Back in FT30, I mentioned an item which had appeared in the *Sunday Times* (15 Jan 1978): A man was accidentally killed in Thonburi, Thailand, in a fight with his friend over which came first, the chicken or the egg. Now, are these variations on a modern foaftale, or do people in the Far East while away the hours arguing such conundrums? I feel we should be told.

■ Nathan Hicks, 35, upset because his younger brother, Herbert, had used six rolls of lavatory paper in two days, shot and killed him, said police in St Louis. He was charged with second degree murder.

[AP] *Middlesbrough Eve. Gazette* 9 Dec; *Guardian* 10 Dec 1986.

■ A senior executive officer at the Department of Employment, a man of 'impeccable character', strangled his Austrian wife at the dining table in December 1985 after an argument over the place on it for the German mustard. Thomas Corlett, 58, had been married to Erika, 63, for fifteen years. "It was her fault", he told the police. "I always placed my newspaper on one side of my plate, the mustard on the other. But she moved my paper and put the mustard in its place instead, saying, 'That's where I want it, and that's where I will put it.' She started shouting and kept on and on about the paper. She raised her hand and I thought she was going to hit me. I just grabbed her by the throat and we fell to the floor." In July 1987, he was jailed for three years. *D.Telegraph* 9, 10, 15 July 1987.

■ A 47-year-old Chinese peasant detonated a home-made bomb in a passenger train, stabbed two people dead and wounded 24, because he was dissatisfied with Communist Party policies and his own life. He was executed. *Middlesbrough Eve. Gazette* 24 June 1987.

■ As a proper *grand guignol* finale, we go to Wara near Banyuwangi in the extreme east of Java, where a rice farmer on a month-long fast, one Wirjo aged 40, hanged himself on 15 April 1987 after hacking his 4-year-old son Teuku and 17 other people to death with a sickle in a rampage which began when he dug up his long-dead mother in the village graveyard and gnawed her bones. 14 others were wounded and hospitalised. One of the dead

was a school student who had been decapitated. [R] *Middlesbrough Eve. Gazette* 16 April; *Telegraph* 17 April 1987. According to the *Weekly World News* (26 May 1987), the farmer's name was Gun-Gun Kerja, and the police hunted him in vain for a week. He was finally found hanging from a tree in a teak forest 20 miles away by a logger. The initial report was in *Kompas*, Indonesia's largest newspaper.

Notice that these items always seem to appear first in the *Middlesbrough Evening Gazette*. What this means I don't know.

Paul Sieveking

## TRUE GRIT

● Orange-coloured snow, which fell on the Cairngorms around the middle of March 1987, was blamed upon dust blown from the Sahara. *Scotsman* 25 March 1987.

● In the Twente region, which straddles the border of Netherlands and West Germany, a "red-brown" layer of fine dust was found covering cars on the morning of April 4. It was said to have travelled from the Sahara after heavy sandstorms there the previous week. *Dagblad Tubantia* 6 April 1987.

● The west African land of Mauritania suffered one of its "worst" sandstorms on 5th May, with violent winds and "zero visibility" in places. [SAPA, R] Johannesburg (S.Africa) *Star* 6 May 1987. This was the same day, we note, that Moscow was daubed with a complementary colour. See: GREEN RAIN OVER MOSCOW on p24.

A report on the 'desertification' of the Sahel region of southern Mauritania appeared in the *Times* 15 Sept 1987. It seems the dust storms have been getting worse since the 1960s, stripping away the

dangerously thin soil. It is estimated that about 100 million tonnes of the red topsoil is in the atmosphere over the North Atlantic every year, and falls as far away as the Caribbean or South America. Climatologists say the region could become desert very quickly.

● On August 17, a fine dust rained from skies throughout Europe. In London, motorists woke up to find red spots on their cars. In North Wales, motorists had to drive through a light haze of red dust. In Paris, cars were spotted with a "yellow" dust, which may or may not have come from the enormous cloud – said to contain 150,000 tonnes of Moroccan, Algerian and Spanish sand – which the Met. Office at Bracknell described as "orange-red" and travelling north at between 15,000 and 20,000 feet. *Sun*, Montreal *Gazette*, *D.Post* (N.Wales) 18 Aug 1987.

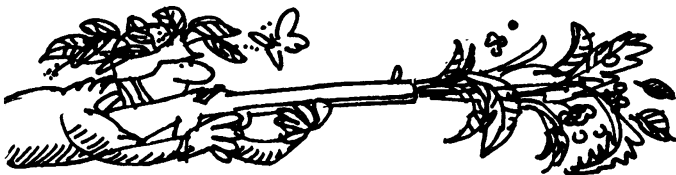
## JERSEY DEVIL

Strange roars and night-time growlings are worrying residents of the New Jersey Pine Barrens, for years the supposed home of the kangaroo / flying horse / who-knows-what known as the Jersey Devil.

Local police have set out to track down the mystery animal disturbing the well-earned sleep of Pittsgrove Township. "I personally don't know what it is," said Det.-Sgt. William Prato. "We've had reports of a large black cat with a large black tail." He told the AP news agency (cited by the *Attleboro, MA, Sun Chronicle*, 24 June 1987) that he suspected a panther, or possibly "domestic cats in heat".

We have rather neglected the North American ABC scene of late, so we will remedy this in an issue, near you, soon.

## IN HIDING



## COMRADE DISASTER

The most disastrous tour of duty of Zimbabwe's war of independence ended on 11 November 1986 when rabbit hunters discovered the hiding place of William Bonga. The saga began for the ZANLA guerrilla on his first foray into Rhodesia in 1978 after becoming separated from his unit and losing his AK-47 rifle.

"There was a heavy storm one day soon after we crossed [from Mozambique], and we dispersed in different directions to seek shelter in the bush. I think that was when I lost my weapons", said Bonga, who chose the guerrilla name 'Comrade Disaster' during his military training. He found the cave, which was less than 20 miles from the border, and stayed there alone for the next eight years, leaving only at night to scavenge for food and water. The war ended in December 1979; but Bonga thought it was still going on because he heard gunshots. The cave was a short distance from a Zimbabwe army training camp. *Zimbabwe Herald* 8 Jan; [AP] *Guardian*, *Express*, *Sun*, *Sandwell Express & Star* 9 Jan; Beaumont (TX) *Enterprise* 11 Jan 1987.

## ALL A MISTAKE

December 1986 saw the death of Cesar Yakoub Doweik at the age of 82. He first came to Egypt early in the century and taught French for 15 years. Convinced (erroneously) that he would be forced to leave Egypt after the Suez war in 1956, because he was Jewish, he got his sister to hide him in her cellar – where he remained for the next 22 years, until Egyptian-Israeli relations improved in 1978. "He was like a hermit who rarely talked and was too afraid to burn a light at night" said his sister, according to the *Weekly World News* (3 Feb 1987). All he had was a tiny radio and the Cairo newspaper *Al Akhbar*. When finally he left the cellar he had no desire to leave the house. [For further dedicated fugitives from the wars, see FT36, p13-16.]

## SOLDIERING ON (AGAIN)

Soviet draft dodger Kuzma Panchenko escaped from Red Army troops at a Polish railway station towards the end of World War II. Returning to his home village of Kiselyovka in the Ukraine, Panchenko lived in secret with his wife Anna, building himself a tiny room in their house which he called his 'domestic punishment cell'.

Earlier this year his hiding place was discovered by the village policeman. The draft dodger was arrested, but later released and pardoned because of his advanced age. He is 79.

Anna Panchenko will be made to repay the widow's pension she has claimed since 1945, said the Soviet weekly *Nedlya*, quoted by (R) *Independent* 18 July 1987. This story is so similar to that of Ukrainian collaborator Pavel Navrotsky [FT48 p14] that we suspect we've encountered a Russian rural legend here.

## DRAGON RAZES CHINA

Throughout May an enormous forest fire raged in the north-eastern Chinese region known as Dong-Bei (Manchuria). The "biggest in 40 years", it is believed to have begun on May 6th with an oil-leak from a bush-cutting machine. In just 15 days (at our last report), it has killed over 200 people, injured 223, destroyed tens of thousands of homes and required the mobilisation of 44,000 fire-fighters and relief workers. Conditions were not right for chemical cloud-seeding. Many towns and villages were destroyed, including Xilinji (pop. 20,000). According to a report in the *China Daily*, the town of Tuqiang was razed and 100 inhabitants killed "in 15 minutes" as "huge balls of fire" were propelled out of the forest by 100km/h winds. About 7½% of the 20-million-acre Daxinganlin forest has been destroyed. Blazing along a 75km front, it was likened to "a huge dragon". Just before the fire was brought under control (with the help of fortuitous? snowfalls) towards the end of May, it had reached the Heilongjiang River border with the Soviet Union and was advancing in the north towards the town of Mohe, China's most northerly town only 970 miles from Beijing (Peking) and in the south-west towards Inner Mongolia, an area with China's only reindeer farm. Even more depressing was the news that a huge fire on the Soviet side of the Chinese border was threatening to spread into Inner Mongolia from the south-west.

The biggest concerns are that the forests and wildlife of the area will be irreversibly depleted. There are a great number of nature reserves in this area, including the third largest in China at Huzhong, which provide a habitat for rare plants and animals of international importance (eg. ginseng, lynx, purple martin, and the Manchurian tiger), and which were already under threat from the increased demand for timber. The great fire, which has destroyed 3.7 million hectares of mainly larch forest to the north and west of the Huzhong reserve (which will in turn increase the demands for logging within the reserves) will undoubtedly create a complicated ecological disaster. For example: the Manchurian tiger, of which only about a 100 exist in the wild, needs more than 20 square kilometres of forest to survive, and experts were not certain before the fire that this would be sufficient for a viable population. Pessimists were predicting that the great forests would be logged into extinction before the end of the century – the fire seems to have made that prediction more probable.

In the same period, as a matter of interest, we note that central Africa had the "hottest May on record"; a 5.1R quake in the Pacific south-west of Tokyo; a 3.3R quake in San Francisco area; two forest fires in northern Michigan which razed over 2,025 hectares, including part of the Hiawatha National Forest; and 50 separate fires in the Chita region of Eastern Siberia, destroying 200,000 hectares of woodland.

It was a tough May for trees.

Sources: [R, SAPA, AP, New China News Agency, Xinhua & citations from *China Daily*, *People's Daily* (Renmin Ribao), *Wen Wei Pao* (Hong Kong), in *Johannesburg Star*, *Nairobi Standard*, *Swaziland Observer*, and *Guardian* (5 June 1987).

Bob Rickard

## GERONTOLOGY UPDATE

No-one really knows why we age; various theories are championed. Is it due to the deterioration of DNA and bodily proteins; or to the decline of the endocrine or immune systems; or to a pre-ordained genetic programme; or to the action of free radicals? NDGA neutralises free radicals - and its nothing like the KGB or the FBI. NDGA stands for nordihydroguaiaretic acid (bet you wished you hadn't asked!), and is plentiful in the long-living desert creosote bush. Free radicals are chemically active molecules or atoms with an unpaired outermost electron, and some mutate DNA by tangling its base pairs, or break down cell walls by reacting with the fats and proteins in them. Bad news.

John P. Richie Jr, a biochemist at the University of Louisville, has injected 1,200 female mosquitoes of the species *Aedes aegypti* with NDGA and lengthened their average life-span from 29 to 45 days. Today, mosquitoes... tomorrow, who knows? *Discover Magazine* Jan 1987.

# Li Baoqi, former manager of the Peking Medicinal Corporation, said that a new drug called *huangjing jian* had turned his white hair black, according to the Xinhua news agency. The drug had been prepared by the Shanghai college of traditional medicine, which had made a survey of over 500 people and concluded that 80% of those over 45 suffered from kidney asthenia and lethargy, and this was considered the basic factor in aging. [DPA] *Arab News* 25 Mar 1987.

# Another case of third dentition comes to my notice [see FT48 p64.]. Jovanka

Vasiljevic, 120, Yugoslavia's oldest citizen in 1977, was growing a new set of teeth, according to the news agency Tanjug. Though in good health, her hearing and eyesight were failing; so when she appeared as guest of honour at the first convention of Yugoslav gerontologists, she was aided by her 81-year-old son. Brunswick (ME) *Times-Record* 13 Dec 1977.

# Mrs Anna Eliza Williams, 'officially' Britain's oldest person, celebrated her 114th birthday on 2 June 1987, in the Tuxedo old peoples' home in Swansea. [See FT47 p54]. Her recipe for longevity is a calm temperament and lots of simple plain food, especially greens. *Sandwell Express & Star*, *D.Mail* 2 June; *Scotsman* 3 June 1987.

# John Evans, 'officially' Britain's oldest man, a former miner who lives near Mrs Williams, celebrated his 110th birthday on 19 August 1987. His four children are all over 70. In 1986, Evans, a non-smoking teetotaler who drinks a little honey in boiled water every morning, was given a new lease of life when he became the oldest person ever to have a pace-maker fitted. He has been given permission to build a bathroom at his home in Llewitha, Fforest-fach, Swansea, after using a lavatory at the end of his garden for 98 years. *D.Telegraph* 29 June; *Guardian*, *D.Mirror*, *D.Mail* 19 Aug; *D.Telegraph* 20 Aug 1987.

# Peruvian Tomas Delgado Alcantara, who lived with his son Daniel, 73, in Lima, was born on 14 May 1844, according to a baptismal record, which was supposed to be his. That made him nearly 143 at the time of the report (*National Enquirer* 13 Jan 1987). He got up every morn-



John Evans, officially Britain's oldest man, celebrates his 110th birthday [*Guardian* 20 Aug 1987.]



Tomas Delgado from Peru, reputedly nearly 143 [*National Enquirer* 13 Jan 1987.]

ing at four, and did the household chores, including darning. His eyesight was better than Daniel's 45-year-old wife. Tomas didn't smoke or drink, and lived mainly on raw vegetables. He married twice and had 12 children and large numbers of descendants – four generations of them.

# *The Evening Argus* (24 July 1987) published a photograph of Glen Post in a convalescent home in Columbus, Ohio. He claims to be 118, but "records indicate he is 113".

# Lillie Burton Gayton of Athens, Texas, had a fatal heart attack on 9 February 1987 at the reputed age of 124 years and 10 months. Friends and family had claimed all her life that she was born on 4 April 1862, in Terrell, Texas. All the relevant records burned in a house fire several years ago, said Willie Mae Baker, an old friend. Twenty years earlier, Gayton had been honoured by President Johnson for going to school for the first time at the supposed age of 104. Beaumont (TX) *Enterprise* 14 Feb 1987.

# On 1 June 1987, a local Chinese newspaper reported the death of a woman in Kinjiang province at the age of 140. She died soon after her nose started bleeding on 13 April. The paper did not elaborate. [AP] *Bristol Eve. Post*, *Guardian* 2 June 1987.

# According to the *D.Mail* of 10 Sept 1987, the oldest US citizen is one Florence Knapp of Pennsylvania, who is 113 and unmarried. I hadn't heard of her before...

# Finally, a chap who slipped the longevity listing [FT47 p54]. An African called Modisapudi Elias Mancho died in Bloomfontein, South Africa, at the reputed age of 160 in 1974. He always insisted he was born in 1814. [AP].

Paul Sieveking

## ICONOCLASM DEPT

The fuss about the supposed 'fist' of the Colossus at Rhodes [see p22] had us ferreting through our file on statues. The following clips on monument mugging seemed to be huddling together, so, because we haven't heard much this department since our 'Laughing gunman shoots weeping madonna' story in 1985 [FT43 p19] here they are: ➤ Ballinspittal, Co Cork, Ireland – During our coverage of the great Irish 'Moving Madonna' epidemic in 1985 – see FT45 pp30–34 – we left this most famous of the sites at the point three men with hammers and axes battered the face of the statue and harrangued the stunned crowd. As an update we offer this summary of subsequent events based on a note to us by Leslie Shepard, dated 21 March 1986:

"The men drove off in their car... [and] were stopped by armed Special Branch men at Abbeyleix, who thought they were subversives. It transpired that the three men – Robert Draper (33), Roy Murphy (36) and Anthony Fowler (24) – were members of the Faith Center movement, a Fundamentalist Christian sect headed by US evangelist Dr Gene Scott of California, who believes that the Celts are the lost tribe of Israel." Scott has since publicly dissociated himself from the three men while on US coast-to-coast TV.

"The three were tried at Portlaoise Circuit Court on March 4, 1986, before Judge O'Higgins, charged with 'causing malicious damage in a place of divine worship'. The judge stated that he had to be 'particularly zealous in guarding the rights of the defendants' and dismissed the case on the grounds that the Ballinspittle grotto is not, in fact, a place of divine worship.

To the defendants, at least, it was a place of sinful idolatry." Draper adds, unrepentantly: "The only time that statue moved was when I hit it. If it moves again, we'll be back."

"Robert Draper, who wielded the axe and hammer at Ballinspittle, emerged from the Court triumphantly proclaiming that he was going to demolish other images in wayside shrines. He is since reported to have smashed two more statues of the BVM – one in Ballyfermot, and another in Quarryvale [in his childrens' school]. He appeared with his fellow iconoclasts on the popular 'Late Late Show' on RTE Television on March 7, interviewed by Gay Byrne. Draper arrogantly cited the 4th and 5th Commandments and *Exodus* xxiii, 24, as his authority to smash all the religious statues in Ireland."

Draper claims that religious experiences as he grew up in Ballymun and Finglas turned him away from Catholicism. In 1978 he emigrated to America, and while working as a glazier in 1981 had an intense experience of "the belief in Christ". He spent 14 months 'trying out' various cults, then was struck by the television sermons of Dr Scott. Draper returned to Ireland in 1983 on a self-appointed mission to extend Scott's preaching. He says he "understands" why people are hurt by his acts but is convinced he has done them a favour "saving them and their children from the curse."

The date of the demolition of the Ballinspittle BVM was derived from a tape of a Scott sermon that Draper brought with him from America, in which Scott advises his listeners to "give thirty years to yourself and three to God". October 31st was Draper's 33rd birthday. It was also, in-

cidentally, the anniversary of Martin Luther's rebellion against the Catholic Church by nailing his 39 theses on the door of Wittenburg Cathedral.

As the statue at Ballinspittle was restored to its original form and position – and, by all accounts, to its perceived movements – "there isn't a safe statue in Ireland" (as Eoghan Corry wrote in the *Sunday Press*, March 9, 1986). Sources: on file.

➤ Do you remember our incomplete story - back in FT43 p19 – of the man arrested in Rome for attacking 86 statues and carrying off their noses in a bag? We are able to put a date to that: the *Guardian* for 7 Nov 1985 says the man – "a confused vagabond" – was arrested in gardens of the Villa Borghese where he had done the damage. Our earlier, incomplete, clipping said the man was a "Polish professor of biology". Perhaps he was *disguised* as a vagabond to carry out his mission; he was, he claimed, a Martian acting under orders. But that's what they all say...

➤ And on the subject of 'parts' of statues: an apprentice carpenter, Andrew Thomas, taking offense at the nude statue of Cepmissus (a Greek river god) broke off its pecker with a pick-axe, on the banks of the Wye at Bulth Wells, Powys. He admitted the charge and was ordered to pay £600 compensation to the sculptor Ben Jones. *D.Telegraph* 13 Sept 1986. ...and... eight stone statues of Greek gods at Glasgow School of Art "had their willies chopped off" as the *Sun* put it (7 May 1987). A 'mystery crackpot' is suspected...

➤ A 6ft marble statue of Venus, and two smaller ones of the same goddess, were pushed off walls on the property of Geoff Bridges in Arundel. Geoff, who calls



himself 'Fagin', has imported a huge collection of statues from Italy over the years, but it is plain that some of his neighbours do not share his appreciation of Roman statuary. In the same attack a stone horse was also broken. "This is the 12th time people have damaged property here in three or four years," he says. A few months back a 6ft high version of David had a chisel taken to it – no prizes for guessing where. Police in nearby Littlehampton [ummm...] were "looking into it..." *West Sussex Gazette* 6 Nov 1986.

Although reported in the *Daily Telegraph* on 1st April 1986, we cannot dismiss lightly these two adjacent stories: that a 10ft Easter Cross, erected on top of Cam Peak near Dursley, Gloucestershire, was found chopped in half – and, probably the same weekend, vandals toppled 35 gravestones and smashed 15 others in the cemetery at Chilwell, Nottinghamshire.

That last story was feared, said the report, to be the work of 'devil worshippers'. Similarly, 'black magicians' were thought to have

perpetrated my final item, but I cannot quite figure out exactly why. In contrast to the above stories of destruction, this one involves the mysterious overnight appearance of a statue of a man with his hands clasped in front of him at New Ash Green in Kent, where, exactly a year previously another statue (of a man leaning on a staff) was found. Both are 10ft high and made from wood. One villager thought they "added something to the village. It would be a shame to tear them down." *D.Telegraph* 28 July 1986.

Bob Rickard

## FLOWS OF SEAFOOD

Three odd inundations: Residents of Whiteface, near Dornach in Sutherland, had some trouble with the water supply after heavy rain fell in February. One man turned on the cold tap and saw a two-inch fish flop into his kitchen sink; another, running the bath, found himself sharing a hot tub with the skeleton of a frog. The problem was blamed on storms causing extensive flooding of the water pipes. *D.Mail* 10 Feb 1987.

● In April we heard that "tiny shrimps are pouring from the cold taps in Pershore, Wilts". No explanation this time, but the Water Board was planning to kill them off by tipping chemicals into the water supply. *D.Mail* 28 Apr 1987.

● Less than a month later, seawater crabs were spotted crawling from the freshwater drainage system of Newport, near Launceston, Cornwall. Inspector Nigel Thomas of the RSPCA was called in, and he removed several from the town's storm-water drains. On 17 May more live crabs and nearly two dozen dead ones were discovered in the road nearby. The live crabs were returned to the sea, but local

'experts' were puzzled that they had been found so far inland – Launceston is about 15 miles from the coast.

Mike Millman, the fishing correspondent of the *Western Morning News* (18 May 1987), speculated that the crabs



Nigel Thomas collecting crabs in Newport.

might have been left by children returning from the beach. "I am amazed that these things should be that far from the seas, unless they have been deposited there. It is a mystery," he said. Quite so – but we can think of a couple of ways they might have got there, and for the time being the Launceston Crabs have found a resting place in our file on 'falls and flows'. Additional source: *Cornish & Devon Post* 23 May 1987.

● Three crayfish were discovered under a Telecom manhole cover on the island of Guernsey on 18 Oct 1987, a day after the Great British (and French) Hurricane, and were taken to the Guernsey aquarium. No-one knew how they got into the insulated hole, but someone speculated that they had escaped from a local crayfish farm, and entered the system through gaps in the manhole cover which are considerably smaller than the four inches the creatures measured: so they must have been there for some time. They are renowned for their frail constitution and require extremely pure water to survive. *D.Telegraph* 19 Oct 1987.

## MORE UPDATES

★ **AMERICAN LITIGATION** [FT47 p6.] Judith Richardson Haimes, awarded more than a million dollars damages by a Philadelphia court for loss of psychic powers after a brain X-ray, has had her award overturned by Common Pleas Judge Leon Katz, who called it 'grossly excessive'. He ordered a new trial. Houston (TX) *Chronicle* 9 Aug 1986.

★ **WIN FOR NUDE WORSHIPPERS** [FT47 p9.] The nude procession every 8/9 March to the temple of the goddess Renuka Devi in Chandragutti, 200 miles north-west of Bangalore in the state of Karnataka, India, was effectively banned in 1987. The origins of the custom are lost in the mists of antiquity; technically, it was banned in 1966, but no effort was made to prevent it, until last year's fiasco. This year, 2,000 armed police patrolled Chadragutti enforcing a curfew. [UN] *Arab News*, St Louis *Post-Dispatch*, Saratoga Springs (NY) *Saratogan* 9 Mar 1987.

★ **BURIED BY BOOKS** [FT48 p19] Carole Webb, 22, took a book off a shelf in the publishing warehouse in which she works, in Abingdon, Oxford-shire, and was promptly buried beneath an avalanche of books weighing 20 tons. By luck she was not seriously injured, but needed rescuing by firemen and treatment in an Oxford hospital. *Sun* 22 July 1987.

★ **EARTH FIRST!** [FT46 p15] The activities of this radical group of 'environmental activists' were severely criticised when one of their 'Ecodefence' tactics became horrifically successful. Their chief opponent in California has been the Oregon-based Louisiana-Pacific Company and their logging in woodland

tracts hundreds of years old. Earth First! have taken to driving 11-inch nails deep into trees to sabotage the logging equipment, forcing LPC to use metal-detectors. One such nail escaped detection and shattered a band saw at a mill north of San Francisco. George Anderson, 23, was struck in the neck and face by the flailing band and severely wounded. It is not said whether he survived. LPC have also alleged the environmental terrorists use "witchcraft" spells against them, and describe instances in which the remains of slaughtered animals have been draped over their logging equipment. *Guardian* 18 May 1987.

★ **PEEK AT THE PYRAMIDS** [FT48 p5] We left our visit to Giza, last issue, with a run-down of a hi-tech exploration of the last intact 'boat-pit' at the base of the Great Pyramid, by a joint National Geographic and the Egyptian

Antiquities Organization. It seems all has gone to plan. Specialists from NASA and Black & Decker had developed a unique slow-turning, high-torque drill with a vacuum (to remove the debris) and an air-lock to preserve the atmosphere of the subterranean chamber sealed for 4,600 years. A tiny but powerful video camera was lowered through the 3½-inch air-lock, with illuminating fiber-optics, and the whole chamber and its contents were photographed for later detailed examination. The single most important discovery was an enormous model of a funerary boat – twin to the one in the Giza museum – but disassembled and covered with reed matting. It confirms the prediction of Kamal al Mallakh, the archaeologist who discovered the previous boat in 1954. 159 quarts of air were drawn out of the chamber for

analysis, including possible pollen and micro-organism content. But hopes that this was original air from Fourth Dynasty Egypt faded – upon sampling it with his nose, Pieter Tans, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration physicist, said it merely smelled stale, suggesting that the chamber had never been air-tight. *Time*, *Newsweek* 2 Nov 1987.

## THE FATAL KISS

The *Lanzhou Evening News* said that a bridegroom killed his new wife at a wedding reception in north-east China with a kiss on the neck which was too passionate and long. Guests heard a scream and rushed in to find bride and groom unconscious on a sofa. They were rushed to hospital, but the bride was dead on arrival. Doctors decided that the kiss had caused heart palpitations. *Shropshire Star* 1 Oct 1986.

## A BIG HAND FOR THE COLOSSUS

The beginning of July saw an enormous amount of reportage, disputation and downright sopiness about a story that the hand of the Colossus of Rhodes had been found in the harbour there. Trying to make sense of all this verbiage is difficult, but let's start at the beginning.

In 304 BC, the Rhodians successfully withstood a siege, and decided to put up a statue to commemorate the fact. They commissioned a sculptor called Chares of Lindos (or 'Charles' as the *Guardian* called him at one point!), and by about 290 BC the Colossus

was in place. Chares, finding his work unappreciated, committed suicide by throwing himself into the harbour. Some 70 years later an earthquake struck and the statue, of Helios, the patron god of Rhodes, broke at the knees and fell down.

Now for the important details: the statue stood beside the harbour, not straddling it as later tradition would have it. It was between 100 and 120 feet high, and it was a hollow construction of bronze plates on an iron framework. It was described by Philon of Byzantium, Pliny and Strabo, who remarked on its cavernous hollow interior as it lay where it fell... on dry land. In 653 AD the Saracen conquerors of Rhodes sold the remains to Jewish merchants who carried the bronze off to Syria, on 980 camels, to be melted down and made into weapons. Not much chance of finding any of it, you'd think.

Enter Ann Dankbaar, a Dutch-born psychic now living in Australia. Ms Dankbaar claimed to have had her psychic powers certificated by the University of Adelaide, but this has since been denied. On holiday in Rhodes in 1985, Ms Dankbaar claims to have 'heard' the screams of the dying Chares (hard to imagine someone screaming with their lungs full of water, but...) and to have pinpointed the remains of the Colossus lying on the harbour bed. Specifically, she claimed to have found a hand, although she also said that the rest of the statue is lying there underwater in broken sections. The hand was lying 820 yards offshore, and it was only as a result of a 'chance remark' to a Greek acquaintance that Ms Dankbaar's discovery was publicised. So much for our lady-psychic; all further requests for information were



Greek sailors of the Poseidon underwater research ship, with the giant stone 'hand' from Rhodes harbour [*Independent* 7 July 1987.]

referred to her literary agent in London, who had already sold the rights to a Sunday newspaper.

Two coastguard frogmen were sent down at the indicated spot, and duly found, filmed and eventually raised a large block of limestone. This was some six feet across, five feet high, and shaped like a fist with the fingers broken off [see photo]. Suddenly put on the spot by reporters, a number of archaeologists promptly made fools of themselves. There was talk of the bronze statue having a limestone infill to give 'greater stability' in high winds (in the statue's extremities?!) and of this totally useless material being carried off by ship... ships which promptly sank in the harbour. Then a hilarious dispute broke out between the Greek Minister of Merchant Marine, Stathis Alexandris, under whose aegis the divers were working, and Melina Mercouri, the Minister of Culture, whose archaeologists

roundly condemned the whole affair as a farce.

Ms Mercouri seems to have finally won the day. The lump of stone was identified as having been marked by a mechanical digger or a crane grab during work on Rhodes harbour two or three years previously. It was part of a large quantity of rock which had been dumped on the harbour bed. The whole thing was summed up as a 'remarkable coincidence'... that the hand-shaped rock was dumped on the seabed, and that Ms Dankbaar had somehow 'found' it. What no one seems to have noticed is the unremarkable coincidence of dates. If the rock was dumped 'two or three years ago', that would have been around 1985. When was Ms Dankbaar in Rhodes? 1985. Draw your own conclusions.

Sources: *Sunday Times* 28 June; most British national papers 5-8 July; *Adelaide Advertiser* 8-9 July; *Midi-Madagasikara* 7-9 July; *Pakistan Times* 9 July 1987.

**Steve Moore**

## GREEN RAIN OVER MOSCOW

■ Muscovites were puzzled by a green sky and green rain around the capital on 5 May 1987. According to *Izvestia*, scientists from the Moscow meteorological centre began investigating after receiving calls from five different suburbs. Analysis showed that 80% of the sediment from the rain was pollen. This was due to the unusually late spring, according to Radio Moscow (17 May).

"A great number of trees and bushes have bloomed within a very short period." *Guardian, Independent, Telegraph* 18 May; *Weekly World News* 7 July 1987.

■ A day later – on May 6 – a "greenish cloud" drifted over Leicestershire. The government's Health and Safety Executive said they had no idea where the 70km-long cloud, which extended from ground level to a height of 1,200m, came from or what it was composed of. The news reporter jumped to the conclusion that it was a chemical cloud of some sort, mentioning theories that it was sodium dioxide from power station chimneys in Nottinghamshire or perhaps "industrial pollution blown from the Continent". Because the report says that the mystery cloud drifted 65km towards Nottinghamshire, it seems hardly likely to have come from there unless there was a 180° reversal of the prevailing winds. The state-owned Central Electricity Generating Board denied responsibility but initiated an investigation just in case. Johannesburg (S.Africa) *Star* 7 May 1987, citing the *Times*.

■ Thirteen days earlier – on April 22 – a British Airways Boeing 707, flight 009 from London Heathrow to Bangkok, was flying over the Soviet Union that evening, when all five crew witnessed a UFO with a long row of phosphorescent lights – one of them green – which accelerated across the nose of the aircraft and disappeared over the Kazhakstan horizon. This was the first 'official' BA UFO report. Soviet air traffic control said there was no other aircraft in the vicinity. [AP,R] *Times* 27 June, several US papers 28 June 1987.

## YOUTHFUL COSMOS

It had to happen. Hard on the heels of our report [FT48 p13] that the Universe might be twice as old as we had thought came a clipping suggesting quite a different state of play.

A new dating method employed by Prof. Harvey Butcher, of the Kapteyn Astronomical Institute in the Netherlands, indicates that life, the universe and everything have been around for a mere 10 billion years. Usual estimates range from 15-18 billion, and Dr Tom Shanks of Durham University reckons the true figure is more like 29 billion years.

Prof. Butcher's work, published in *Nature*, 9 July 1987, uses a 'clock' comparing the decay of the radioactive element thorium with the stable neodymium. The ratio of thorium to neodymium in a star would indicate its age. Butcher was surprised to discover that no difference in the ratio was detectable when supposedly 'old' and 'new' stars were compared. Unless thorium is actually manufactured within a star, the astronomer concluded, we must be living in a young and sprightly universe. Additional source: *Daily Telegraph* 10 July 1987.

## STUBBORN WEEDS

Seeds brought up from the wreckage of the Spanish galleon *Atocha*, which sank off Key West during a hurricane in 1622, have sprouted after 350 years under water. The seeds, preserved by a coating of mud, turned out to be from the local 'beggar tick' weed. The several grape, olive and apricot pits brought to the surface at the same time didn't make it.

Corey Malcolm, one of the archaeologists involved in the salvage, put the weed seeds in fresh water to prevent their deterioration, late in May this year [1987]. After nine days, four of them began to sprout, and now Malcolm has the two survivors in his window box. When reported in the *Kent County Daily Times* (West Warwick, RI), 22 June 1987, the seedlings were two inches high and still growing.

The salvage crew are believed to be rather more excited by the \$130 million worth of gold, silver and jewels salvaged with the beggar ticks.

For some 2,000-year-old tomato seeds which sprouted see SEEDS OF TIME [FT44 p13].

## SPONTANEOUS EXCAVATIONS

Heavy rain has exposed what appears to be a Roman burial ground at a cement works at Ketton, Leicestershire. *D.Telegraph* 27 June 1987. A week later, there was an AP report that thousands of people had flocked to Boajidu in south-eastern Sierra Leone after heavy rain had exposed diamonds in the dirt streets. Mines ministry officials said they had issued over 2,000 prospecting licences, and the

government had sent army and security forces to maintain order and prevent smuggling. *The Record* (NJ) 5 July 1987.

## ASKING FOR TROUBLE

On 21 May 1987, the auditorium of the Tricycle Theatre in Kilburn, north London, was destroyed by flames from a timber yard. The play being staged was called *Burning Point*. Early on the morning of 1 June, another of London's fringe theatres, the Bush, was damaged by fire which seemed to have been caused by an electrical fault. The Bush was due to premiere *Effie's Burning* on 8 June. *D.Mirror* 22 May; *Guardian* 3 June 1987.

■ On 27 May, lunchtime drinkers watched from a beer garden as firemen fought a house blaze at the rear of the Pyrotechnist's Arms in Nunhead. *South London Press* 29 May 1987.

## LIGHTNING OUR DARKNESS

The thief who stole a statue of the Virgin Mary from a Cleveland charity hospital on 2 April had a religious experience shortly thereafter.

The unnamed 43y-old robber lifted the statue from its plinth as he left the hospital and made off with it. He had not gone far when, he said, a lightning bolt struck nearby. "I thought it was a message from God," the thief told security guards who had chased him, claiming that as a result he had decided to return the gold-plated \$600 statue just before he was seized.

The national weather service, consulted by the *Plain Dealer* (OH), 4 Apr 1987, said that conditions were not right for lightning strikes.

## MONTREAL'S VANISHING CATS



In the last few months of 1986, hundreds of cats had been disappearing from Montreal's streets, according to the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (CSPCA). "We've got a 50% increase in cat disappearances" said the CSPCA coordination director. "I'm getting 10 to 20 reports a day. 80 to 90% of them are black and white. It's really bizarre. My first reaction was that they were being snatched for research. But now we don't think this is the case." She now suspects the motive is fur or food. As for pussy-fur coats, a Montreal furrier said it was unlikely. The fur is too soft, and in any case it would take more than 60 cats to make a coat. There is evidence that catnappers are at work. "A tall, heavy-set man driving a grey van" was spotted stealing cats in a suburb; and a woman reported finding her cat tied with string to a bush. She untied it, but it vanished a week later. The CSPCA pointed out that no one needed to steal cats in Montreal, because the city was "drowning in a sea of stray cats" – 150 a day were brought to the CSPCA shelter. *Omaha World Herald* 18 Jan; *Orange County Register* 14 Feb 1987.

## NOW YOU SEE IT...

Donald Watt, 50, leader of the Lochaber mountain rescue team and climbing mate George Bruce, 45, were at the 3,200-foot summit of Ben Finlay, a remote peak in Ross-shire, when they spotted a two-storey lodge on the shores of Loch Mullardoch about two miles away. They decided to climb down and shelter there for the night. They fixed its position and kept it in view for more than fifteen minutes till it became obscured by a ridge. When they reached the loch the building wasn't there.

Mr Watt told Alex Scotland of the [Scottish] *Sunday Mail* (17 May 1987): "I've spent over 30 years in the mountains but nothing as weird as this has ever happened to me. We spotted the two-storey stone-built lodge independently of each other. It was neither marked on the ordnance survey map nor included in the mountaineering guide book. We've since learned that a shooting lodge in the same part of the valley vanished under water when a hydro-electric dam was built there over 40 years ago."

The *Sunday Mail* for 31 May 1987 carried a letter from one Pete Murray of Blackburn, West Lothian, who said that in June 1951 he had demolished Ben Ula lodge, which he thinks was the one the climbers had seen. The Hydro Board had asked for it to be levelled in case its chimneys became a danger to boats.

The odd thing about this phantom building is that it could not have reappeared where it initially stood. For more cases, see Michell & Rickard: *Phenomena*, pp50–51.

## SYNCHRONICITY

➤ The name Karen seems to carry a certain synchronistic resonance. Back in 1984, Karen Dawn Southwick, 22, daughter of Alfred G. Southwick, was married on 6 August in St Michaels' and All Angels, Tettenhall Regis, near Wolverhampton. Three hours later, Karen Dawn Southwick, 22, daughter of Alfred G. Southwick, was married in the same church. The flaw in the symmetry was that the middle names of the fathers were George and Gordon. *Shropshire Star*, *Wolverhampton Express and Star* 8 Aug 1984.

In 1986, two women called Karen Williams from the same housing estate in Ely, Cardiff, had babies in the same hospital on the same day. The one aged 19 had a son called Owain and the one aged 23 had a daughter, Kelly. *D.Mirror* 4 Sept 1986.

Readers might have been puzzled by 'Double Birth' (FT42, p20) which began: "A double birth of a different kind, also involving a Karen..." Somehow the initial story got mislaid, and we can't remember what it was. The item was about a Karen Smith who gave birth, in 1984, to two healthy boys, within minutes, who had been conceived at different times and grew in different wombs.

➤ Mrs Sue Alton, 33, of Swanmill Road, Dorking, Surrey, was riding with some friends along Pilgrim's Way, a footpath in Abinger Hammer near Dorking, on the weekend of 28/29 March 1987. Her horse bolted, she was thrown head-first against a 5 foot tall stone monument, and was killed almost instantly. The monument had been erected in 1873 to mark the spot where the Bishop of Winchester, Samuel Wilberforce, had been

killed while reading the Bible by falling on his head when his horse put a hoof in a hole. *Western Morning News*, *Telegraph*, *Mail* 30 Mar 1987.

➤ Five months later, there was another bizarre equine accident in Surrey. An 18-year-old girl of Clockhouse Lane West, Egham, was crushed when her horse collapsed from a heart attack, and died in hospital on 12 August. Her name was Jennifer Squelch. *Telegraph* 13 Aug 1987.

➤ The 7 January birth of Chadwick Parker Hume continued a four-generation tradition started by his great-grandfather. Lee Royal Jenney was born in Warren, Michigan, on 7 Jan 1882; his daughter, Florence Hume, in New York City on 7 Jan 1925; her son, Craig Hume, in Boston on 7 Jan 1955; and his son, Chadwick, in Dallas on 7 Jan 1987. The fourth birth involved a bit of cheating: the report says vaguely that "family planning and modern medicine helped out". Beaumont (TX) *Enterprise* 31 Jan 1987.

➤ A pensioner's Christmas dinner arrived a month early (26 Nov) when a two-and-a-half pheasant crashed through Mrs Frances Over's window in New Milton, Hampshire, and collapsed dead under a bed. "I'll pluck it straight away" she said. *D.Mail*, *D.Express* 27 Nov 1984.

➤ Golfer Buddy Herrara, 61, had never hit a hole in one in 40 years of play. Then, at Coral Gables, Florida, he had two, at the 6th and 9th holes. His claim might not have been very credible if the three other members of his foursome had not all been Catholic priests. *Aberdeen Press & Journal* 27 June 1987.

➤ Two small landscapes by

the 19th century artist James Stark were sent, from different parts of the country, for auction by the firm of Bearnas in Torquay, Devon. Individually, they were valued at about £300 each; but together they fetched £5,100, as they were a matching pair. *S.Express* 22 Mar 1987.

➤ Edgar Allan Poe wrote *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* in 1837. Four shipwrecked sailors drew lots to pick who should be eaten by the others. The loser was called Richard Parker. In 1884, the Mignoette was shipwrecked in the South Atlantic. Four sailors survived for 20 days with only two tins of parsnips and a captured turtle. One of them was a 17-year-old boy who was killed and eaten by his fellow crew members. The survivors were eventually rescued and two of them were sentenced to death in England for the murder, but were immediately reprieved. The victim's name was Richard Parker. *D.Telegraph* 9 Jan 1987.

## LEAPING BALLS

Two teenage anglers fishing by the Thames at Gray's in Essex were surprised to see small solid rubber balls 'shooting out of the ground' back in July 1986. The spheres were rust-coloured, about the size of squash balls, and leapt about 12 feet in the air. A passing policeman named Kieron Dale collected about 60 in his helmet and took them back to the station, where officers speculated that they might have come from sewer pipes. Our correspondent Michael Goss, who lives in the area, remembers the incident, but naturally was on holiday at the time: and so another arcane key eludes our grasp. Oh well... *S.Express* 27 July 1986.



## RHODE ISLAND SEES RED

A sniper who terrorised Rhode Island and south-eastern Massachusetts carried out at least 11 attacks in a five-mile radius around North Smithfield, RI, December 1986 to January 1987. Smithfield is a 10,000-strong community whose biggest employer is the local Tupperware factory; its 15-man police force, severely stretched by these untoward events, failed to capture the assailant(s).

Here's a brief chronology, summarised from a number of local newspaper clips forwarded by our correspondent Joseph Trainor:

● **8 Dec 1986:** First attack. Anthony Amantea, 42, shot in the throat in his North Smithfield home at 11pm. He survives.

● **10 Dec:** 9.54pm: One shot grazes 32 year-old Richard Galinis of Bellingham, Mass.

● **11 Dec:** Truck driver Michael Clec's windscreen shattered by a bullet as he drove through North Smithfield at 11pm. This was the only shooting not directed at a home.

● **13 Dec:** Elaine Carrigan, 52, struck in the arm as she watches TV in North Smithfield. The time: 12.20am.

● **15 Dec:** Gregory Lee, 26, slightly wounded at his parents' Cumberland, RI home by a single shot fired at 9.44pm.

● **16 Dec:** One shot fired at North Smithfield's Robert Bliss, 32, at 5.30pm. He is unhurt.

● **17 Dec:** Shooting in Cumberland, 9.45pm. Arnaldo Claudio, 63, is the target.

● **1 Jan 1987:** Four .22 shots fired into Leslie Clark's Bellingham home through a picture window at 9.19pm. Police describe this as the eighth attack since the flap

began, and the first in which more than one shot was fired. Four cartridges found outside the house, and one bullet recovered inside.

● **4 Jan:** Bullet hole found in a North Smithfield garage. No-one hurt.

● **6 Jan:** Joseph Haczynski III, 27, reports one shot fired at his North Smithfield home at 10.26pm

● **8 Jan:** Employee of a North Smithfield mental hospital hit by one of two point 22 bullets fired through the kitchen window. Alan Gordon, 36, later described as "stable" in intensive care. Bullet fragments sent to FBI labs; police report that the bullets were fired at a range of about 160 feet and reveal that at least three of the 11 incidents to date were connected. From his hospital bed, Gordon tells reporters, "it was like getting hit with a baseball bat." Police plan to co-ordinate hunt with National Guard and FBI.

● **12 Jan:** \$10,000 reward offered. North Smithfield police chief Richard Brady "very confident" of success.

● **13 Jan:** National Guard called out. Offers of \$2,000 and

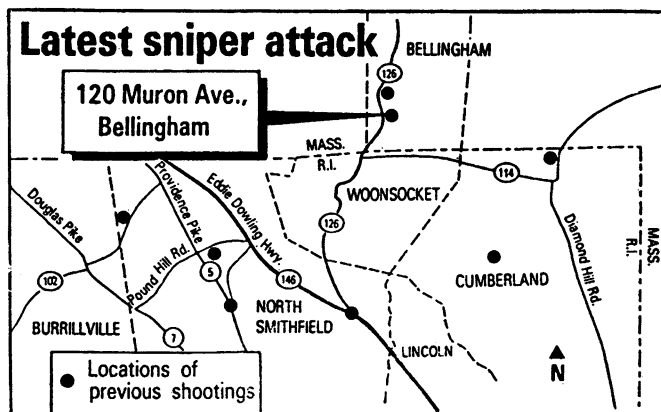
\$3,000 rewards from Cumberland and North Smithfield.

There seem to have been no more shootings after 8 January, and we have few details of ballistics tests or other forensic investigations. The weapon used, a .22 semi-automatic handgun or – more probably – rifle, is common in America. "It's your first gun, the first gun your dad buys you," said a National Rifle Association spokesman.

While classifying these incidents as interesting, we feel that they are a good deal more likely to have a 'rational' (or whatever) explanation than the bizarre Antibes case reported in *FT* 46 pp20-1. Other 'phantom sniper' cases are recorded in *INFO Journal* nos. 26 and 27.

Sources for this story: Attleboro (MA) *Sun-Chronicle* 3 Jan; Providence (RI) *Journal-Bulletin* 3+14+15 Jan; *Pawtuxet Valley Daily Times* (West Warwick, RI) 9+10+13+14 Jan; Providence (RI) *Sunday Journal* 11 Jan 1987.

Mike Dash



From the Providence (RI) *Journal-Bulletin* 3 Jan 1987.

## VOODOO REBELS

'Voodoo priestess' Alice Lakwena's rebel forces have been routed in a series of battles around Iyolwa, 30 miles north of Lake Victoria, according to official sources in Uganda. Lakwena's 4-5,000 strong Holy Spirit Movement have been fighting government forces since January.

Early in July, loyal troops attacked 2,000 rebels in their camp at Opit, in the Gulu area of northern Uganda, routing them and killing 217. Rebel survivors were reported to be "in a trance" and were found to be smeared with oils and unguents which they had been assured would ward off bullets. (Similar techniques were used to boost the morale of Boxer rebels in turn-of-the-century China.) The cult, which appears to mix folk magic with messianic Christianity, has suffered numerous setbacks since the early summer. Another 227 rebels were reportedly killed at Cwero on 7 June, and after the battles around Opit 1,500 survivors were thought to have fled north with their charismatic leader, alleged once a barmaid and prostitute.

Kampala appears to have seriously under-estimated Lakwena's resilience. In October, the Holy Spirit Battalion fought a series of engagements around Iyolwa, only 150 miles east of the capital. Government troops reported that at least 1,000 rebels had been killed. Each battlefield has been littered with Lakwena's "magic symbols". At Opit they found wire models of helicopters and grenades, slaughtered cats, two live chameleons, bibles, an altar covered in flowers and pictures of Christ, and a trench "dug to resemble a river".

The cult, whose members adhere to a strict code of



Alice Lakwena.

temperance and celibacy, believe that their leader's charms can turn into bullets and grenades the rocks they hurl at government troops. Lakwena - a 27yr-old Acholi woman - comes from northern Uganda, an area still strong in its support for deposed President Milton Obote. One of her aides is Prof. Isaac Newton Ojok, Minister of Education in Obote's 1980-85 government.

The priestess speaks in tongues, and her followers believe that she is in direct communication with Christ. In addition to her shea-nut oil potions, she maintains morale by telling her troops that the bodies left on the battlefield are those of government soldiers. "What actually happens," she says, "is that the enemy kill themselves by shooting at each other."

The Holy Spirit Movement is the most important of the half-dozen rebel groups fighting the current regime. Ac-

cording to Prof. Ojok: "The guidance of the Holy Spirit is helping us fight this war. And with more prayers from those who care for Uganda, we will win." Sober estimates of the poorly-armed Battalion's offensive capability suggest that this is unlikely. However, it is believed that 2,500 rebels are poised to assault Kampala itself. *Guardian* 7 July; *D.Telegraph* 8 July, 5+14 + 15+26 Oct; *Times* 12 Oct; *Independent* 15 Oct 1987.

Mike Dash

## POSTSCRIPT

At the beginning of November Alice's rebellion collapsed in the swamps of the Iganga district, and she was last seen wounded in the leg being pushed northwards on a bicycle by seven followers. Her decision to take her Holy Spirit army into southern Uganda proved fatal for her reign of terror, because she had to face not only the National Resistance Army (NRA) but the villagers of this region still remember the last invasion from the north, when former-President Obote's brutal troops massacred and pilaged at will. Consequently, gangs from villages set up ambushes, mounted running attacks and hunted down Holy Spirit groups, who were then stoned or hacked to death, despite the pleas from district officials to leave it to the authorities. Of the 4,000 or so that followed her south in September, 1,500 lay dead; altogether, it is reckoned that at least 5,000 died in her cause since the conflict began in December 1986.

Our latest account - *Observer* 8 Nov 1987 - gives a little more detail about 27yr-old Alice Lakwena - whose surname means 'messiah' in Acholi language - and her spell over her troops. The information comes from cap-

tured Holy Spirit fighters, who were relieved their nightmare was over. Many were students press-ganged by her thugs, and given a simple choice: join or "We will cut you with a panga (machete)." She established a hierarchy of fear, policed by the 'stonemen', led by 'controllists' who would kill men at the slightest disobedience or sign of defection on the battlefield. It seems that Alice was possessed by a whole entourage of spirits – "Miriam, Medina, Sheban, Invisible Chairman and others. The worst was Wrong Element. When Wrong Element came, Alice put on her white robe and there was no messing. If you coughed on parade the controllists killed you."

Notebooks recovered from rebel camps provided a record of Alice's sermons, "a mixture of tribalism and superstition". She fulminated against the "Westerners", not Whites but the ruling clan of President Yoweri Museveni from western Uganda; the Acholi are from the extremely poor north and east. The books also contained recipes for bombs made from scorpions, black ants and monkey flesh. Daily life in her camps was dominated by prayer sessions, playing upon the poverty and fear of her congregation. President Museveni has promised an amnesty to her followers. "Alice Lakwena has really worked on their brains," said the district administrator of Iganga.

#### RJMR

● We take this opportunity to round up some other Central African cult tales [see also FT48 p30].

● Kenyan religious militant Elijah Masinde died, aged 85, on 8 June 1987. He is survived by three widows, 60 children and 370 grandchildren.

Masinde was initiated into the *Dini ya Musambwa* cult in 1928. He preached anti-colonialism and taught that the White man's bullets could not kill but would turn to water when fired at cult members.

He was later arrested for wounding a British soldier with a machete after challenging him to 'single combat', and had several brushes with the post-colonial Kenyan authorities. In 1980 he was imprisoned in a mental hospital after telling a Kakamega court that God had sent him to speak to Europeans. *Nairobi Nation* 9 Jun 1987.

● Shaibu Isa, of Lagos, Nigeria, was shot dead while

attempting to prove to relatives that he was invulnerable to rifle bullets. (AFP) *Independent* 6 Jun 1987.

● At the trial of one-time Emperor Jean-Bedel Bokassa, tyrant of the Central African Republic, the prosecution charged that he had ordered a woman to be executed because he feared her magic powers.

Pauline Lingoupou told the court that her mother, known as the 'monkey woman' because she had four breasts, was a powerful sorceress who had spirited her son, the disgraced General Martin Lingoupou, from a Bangui prison. Bokassa denied the story. [AP] *D.Telegraph* 6 Jan 1987.

## TO SLEEP..OR NOT

■ The Yugoslav daily *Vjesnik* (14 April 1986) reported the death of a 50-year-old woman in Zagreb. She had been in a coma for 24 years, the longest in medical history, following heart failure after a gall bladder operation in November 1962. [AFP] *Arab News* 16 Apr 1986.

■ Tomas Izquierdo, a 53-year-old textile worker in Cuba, has not slept since 1945. Dr Pedro Garcia Fleites, one of Cuba's leading psychiatrists, has treated Izquierdo for the last 16 years. In 1970, he was kept under 24-hour observation for two weeks. Even when he lay down to rest with his eyes closed, the electroencephalograms registered the brain activity of a fully-awake person. The nearest state he gets to sleep is a drowsiness produced by prescribed drugs. His doctors believe his sleep mechanism was damaged by an attack of encephalitis when he was 13; but Izquierdo traces his insomnia from trauma suffered during a tonsillectomy shortly afterwards. *Saudi Gazette* 18 Apr 1986.

## BRAZIL FLIGHTS

The small Brazilian city of Itapeva (pop 100,000) has been subjected to a wave of flying rocks, rubbish bins and furniture, some of which have caused injuries. Police have witnessed rocks yanked from the soil banks and flung against windows or dropped on roofs. At a special prayer session in the cathedral, attempting to rid the city of 'supernatural forces', a one-kilo rock fell through the roof and landed near the congregation. Police stumped as usual. *Express* 17 May 1987.

➤ A sighting of a flying pig has been reported in Brazil, according to the *Weekly World News* (24 Mar 1987). Two fishermen told authorities they saw the creature just after sunrise on the banks of the Branco river near Capitari. In 1986 schoolchildren had reported a similar sight more than 500 miles south in the jungle. We recall the mystery turds, apparently made by a huge pig capable of flight, found repeatedly on a first floor balcony in Huntington Beach California in 1982 [FT45, p36].

## CHRIST IN THE MOUNTAIN

The village of Kristineberg lies in the Swedish province of Vasterbotten; it was here in 1946 that miner Johan Olofsson [see photo] 'uncovered' the strange simulacrum of Christ in the rock. He fired the fateful blast on 28 November, according to the Swedish weekly *Vi* (issue 10, 1984), or the day following according to the popular postcard distributed by Mona Lundquist, owner of the local newstand.

Cultists accepted the image as a miracle, which they claimed fulfilled an old prophecy, and according to their version the image also served as a portent, since (they said) it was subsequently found that another blast would have caused a cave-in at the mine. Thus by stopping the blasting, Christ saved the lives of the miners. However Olofsson maintained, and he should know, that a lot of excited people came to see the image, but the work continued very much as before and the 'room' with the picture was eventually filled up with rubble. Today only photographs remain.

The *Vi* article said that villagers had been speculating about the name of Kristineberg. Did it mean 'Krist-inne-i-berget' (Christ inside the mountain)? 'Inne i' can be shortened to 'inni' or 'ini' (like English 'it's'), so 'Kristinniberg' is pronounced much the same as 'Kristineberg'. The true meaning of the name is not explained, but I suppose it means 'Christina's mountain', though I don't know which Christina this was. There are at least two other Kristinebergs in Sweden, and these are named after the queen who reigned from 1644 to 1654; and there are names like Kristinehamn (Christina's port) and, in Finland, Kristinestad (Christina's town) founded by the eponymous queen.

The figure of Christ was about two metres tall, and evidently could be interpreted in some detail. Olofsson told *Vi* that Christ was standing on the head of a serpent (the Devil), and "here you can see the eye, the mouth and the tongue of the serpent, and above Christ's head you can see a white dove descending..."

I think that the picture looks better if you disregard the outer white edge to the right. According to the 'prophecy', Christ was or is to appear three times at Kristineberg, and it seems to me that the image contains three moments or movements which are superimposed on one another. There is the pondering Christ [at 1 in my drawing]: do I detect a vague white question mark above His head? There is Christ stretching out His hand [at 2]; and Christ holding a nice cup of tea [at 3] or perhaps the communion cup? But there is smoke coming from the cup - or is it the



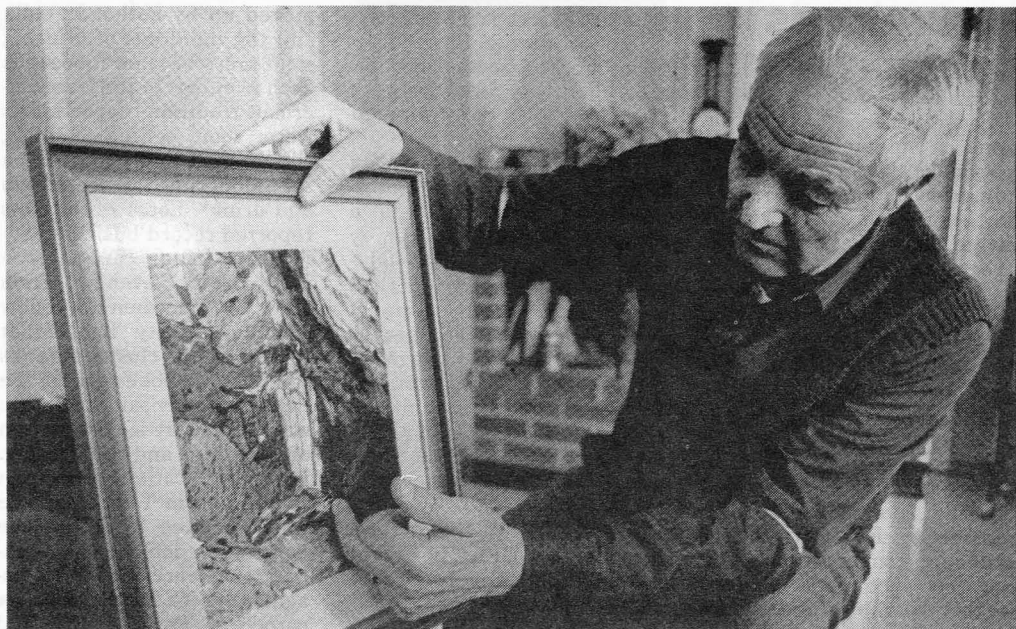
Drawing by Sven Rosen

white dove descending? I cannot find the serpent which is said to be there, but Christ seems to be standing on the back of a polecat or weasel. Now I leave it to you to interpret the picture.

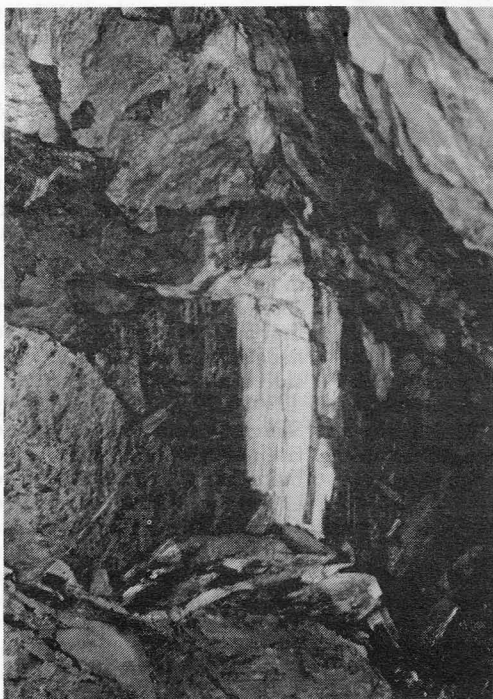
In 1968 a shop in Kristineberg was partly pulled down and reconstructed, and several years later Stig-Göran Sjöström and his wife Hjördis found a marble slab from the shop with a similar image of Christ to the one in the mine, only this time about two inches tall. One cannot actually make it out from the photograph, but they insist that the image is there. It was going to be framed and hung in Kristineberg church.

Acke Folkegård, a local priest, said the images were almost identical, and his eyes filled with tears when he saw the slab. He felt that the image was like a window on a different reality and that the village was blessed. He felt like a pregnant woman since he saw the second image, and could feel "certain movements", which the reporter explained as referring to a possible religious awakening.

Sven Rosén



Johan Olofsson, who found the original simulacrum in 1946, pointing to the 'serpent' at Christ's feet.



The simulacrum of Christ in the rock at Kristineberg.



Hjördis Sjöström holds the second, smaller, simulacrum.

## HOLYGRAMS

The last year or so has seen an astonishing number of claims that an image of Christ, or some other celestial personage, has manifested in humdrum circumstances here on strife-torn Earth. The divide is as great as ever between the two schools of interpretation; those who believe the images are a divine expression, and those who explain with reference to what they see as twin forces of gullibility: the infinite capacity of the human mind to see meaningful pictures in chance patterns, and the need of the credulous to be reassured in matters of religious superstition. We have no space to get involved in this squabble here, so we will simply present a brief listing of recent cases since the incident in Sierck-les-Bains, France, in **FT46** (p25):

➤ **WILMINGTON, CALIFORNIA** – Since 27 July 1986 the image of a golden 2x3ft cross has appeared on the bathroom wall of the Aluiza family's house. The family had gathered, expecting 70yr-old Romaldo Aluiza, a retired Mexican construction worker, to die of progressive liver and stomach cancer. After one daughter, from Arizona, prayed for a sign, she noticed the cross glowing in the bathroom. When viewed through the bathroom window from outside the cross is a "rich golden hue", and at night there are said to be three crosses – it is not confirmed whether this relates to the number of street-lights shining through the window glass, but the family, and the thousands who have come out of faith, prefer to take it as a sign of the Holy Trinity. One day, as if to prove the phenomenon was not related to street-lights or position, Johnny Aluiza, the

youngest son, removed the sliding window and held it up to the sun. "It still appears," he said. For two weeks growing crowds of pilgrims trampled the gardens of neighbours, until the family had to call a halt to the 'viewings'. Strangely, old Romaldo Aluiza rallied, and insisted the family open their doors to the sight-seers once more. CSICOP reared itself in the form of Paul MacCready, who, as far as we know, never went near the house on Robidoux Street, and yet (miraculously?) felt informed enough to imply it must be a fake because "most apparitions turn out to be faked or the result of natural causes." [Knight-Ridder News Service & UPI, in many sources (on file) 10-11 Aug 1986.]

➤ **FOSTORIA, OHIO** – The most famous of last year's incidents involved a large soybean oil storage tank on the outskirts of this town in north-western Ohio. The 15ft-high image of a long-haired, bearded figure was discerned on the side of the 30ft (or 40ft) recently-erected tank, amid the stains of rust and fresh red primer, by Rita Ratchen while driving down nearby Route 12 in early August 1986. A few days later she plucked up the courage to take a visiting friend who also saw the figure. Then she took a Spanish friend – "they can really get excited." – and the word spread. Within a week there were hundreds of cars lining the road by the Fostoria Country Club or driving past slowly, their occupants staring at the tanks in the yard opposite, owned by the Archer Daniels Midland Co. After hearing mounting rumours and increasing phonecalls on the subject Carl Hunnell, editor of the town's paper, *Review Times*, ran the story on the front page on August 19. The story was then

picked up by national media and the hundreds of cruising sight-seers became thousands each evening. In the true American tradition, opportunists were soon selling T-shirts, coffee mugs and photos (\$2 a set) alongside the ice cream and drinks. Local restaurants reported record business.

The image can only be seen in the evening, from about 8:45pm when the yellow sodium security lights that illuminate the cluster of tanks comes on. A spokesman for the ADM company said the image was created by a combination of the stains and the lighting. Even the Catholic diocesan spokesman in Toledo said he was "Inclined to accept the natural phenomenon explanation". But you can't control imaginations so simply with *ex cathedra* buckets of cold water. Soon people were seeing the form of a child lower down; Jesus in different positions, arms up or down, upper-half only or full-length, Christ's heart, a white gown, were all reported. When ADM said they had to continue with the scheduled painting of the tank, there was an instant 'Save the tank' movement and such an outcry that the company agreed to defer it until interest died down a little. On 23rd August came the news that another Christ-like image had been seen on the other side of the tank.

On 22 September, Ricky Simms, an intoxicated 34yr-old fireman, threw 11 paint-filled balloons at the image, and ended up with a suspended sentence for criminal damage and having to lecture teenagers on "the effects of drinking and impulsive acts." The original witness, Rita Ratchen, seems admirably balanced about it all: "I accept it is caused by the lights and the rust," she enthuses, "but I believe the Lord permitted it



to happen that way."

Many sources on file.

☛ **DUNKINSVILLE, OHIO**

— On a grey-painted metal door of the United Methodist Church, on Ohio 44 in Adams County, a discolouration has been interpreted by the community as the figure of Jesus holding up his right arm. "We feel the image is a gift from God," said Rev. Vic Potts. It was first spotted two years previously, and although well-known locally, it only recently gained wider publicity following the previous items. [Cincinnati (OH) *Enquirer* 29 Aug 1986.]

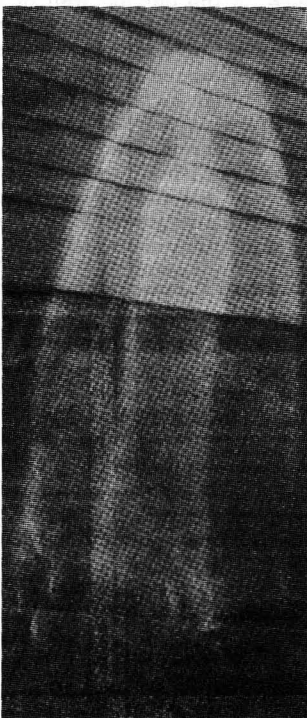
☛ **SEVENOAKS, KENT**

— The vague suggestion of a bearded face appeared on a wall of Clem Fisher's house as he watched TV. Clem, a 64yr-old hospital porter, said he felt "a good force" and sensed a presence at the end of his bed. He asked the hospital chaplain to see the face "to make sure I wasn't going mad. It was always looking at me and seemed to guide my thoughts." One night there was some poltergeist-type activity, a picture was flung across the room and the head of a statue of Christ was snapped off. Unnerved, Clem washed the image off the wall, but a visitor spotted it reappearing in an alcove of his garden wall. Clem believes it is an image of Christ, come to call him to a healing ministry. At least two cures seemed to have been effected by visits to Clem's alcove shrine: a painful neck arthritis and a Bell's palsy of the face. [*People* 28 Sept; *Weekend* 24-30 Dec 1986.]

☛ **SAULT Ste MARIE, ONTARIO** — When a large branch was lopped off a 50yr-old tree in the front yard of Anita Hewgill's home, in 1985, she saw the outline image of the Virgin Mary. Since then, this natural icon receives a constant flow of worshippers



The BVM image on the tree in Sault Ste. Marie [*Weekly World News*].



The BVM image in Wilkes-Barre [*The Tennessean* 4 June 1987.]

on Sundays, who pray and leave religious medals or rosaries among the branches. [*Weekly World News* 13 Jan 1987.]

☛ **O'FALLON, ILLINOIS**

— At the intersection of US50 and Venita Road is a bright yellow tent, with a sign reading: "It's no lie. The devil in a photograph." Inside you will be greeted by Cliff Bergin, an earnest young man, who will tell you that after surviving a head-on smash in Las Vegas in 1981, he found a horrific portrait of Satan in the wreckage of his truck's door. Around him are various enlargements of photos of the ruined door. He says he is writing a book called *Images from Hell* for which he wants \$5 million (a bit beyond the pocket of Fortean Tomes!). Another photo in his book will be of the image of Christ knocking on a door which appeared on a tablemat belonging to Marlene Thomas of Coulterville. It seems her mother left her in charge of a cooking meatloaf when a strange ticking from the over terrified her. Thinking it was going to blow up she pleaded earnestly to God to help her, picked up a tablemat and saw the image. At that moment, she says, the ticking stopped. Praise the Lord!. [Belleville (IL) *News-Democrat* 29 June 1987.]

☛ **WILKES-BARRE, PENN.**

**SYLVANIA** — Each night crowds kneel in prayer on the sidewalk outside a house in Breslau Street, in the suburb of Hanover. Most believe the 6ft image they see on a wall of the empty house is the Virgin Mary with hands folded in prayer. A policeman thinks the image is created by a newly-installed street light. Others say the image has been there for years "but did not appear in its full form" until the night of 2nd June. One local sceptic

says the image is created by light reflected from a figurine in a window across the street, and that the figure moved and returned when the figurine was taken away and returned to its original position. Someone else chips in that it must be a miracle because the figurine is of a man, but the image on the wall is of 'Our Lady of Fatima'. When contacted, the owner of the house opposite said: "I don't have any comment. I just wish these people would get out of here so I can get to bed." Police, summoned when someone mistook the gathering for a brawl, tried to convince the crowd the image was a reflection by holding his hand in front of his torch. "You try to show them, but they won't believe it," he said in dismay. [AP. in many sources, on file, 4 June 1987.]

➤ **ESTILL SPRINGS, TENNESSEE** – One night in May 1987, 66yr-old Arlene Gardner rang up the town's radio station to say that an image of Christ's face kept appearing on the side of her General Electric freezer whenever her neighbours put their porch light on. Within a few weeks more than 3000 people had visited her to see for themselves. Convinced of its importance, Arlene declares: "God revealed to me that he made the freezer into a TV." One newspaper said the image looked more like country singer Willie Nelson – other candidates were Eddie Rabbitt, John Lennon and Ayatollah Khomeini. Many of the visitors ask Arlene to heal them; the trouble is that they also pester Arlene's neighbours, the Partins. Arlene was about to move the freezer to a new location, where it could be viewed more easily by more people, when John and Katherine Partin, both in their 60s, fed up with the noise, and the crowds that



Christ's face on the freezer in Estill Springs. "When the good Lord comes, he won't come on a major appliance" thundered one cleric [People 29 June 1987.]

trampled their lawn, pulled the plug on their porch light.

➤ In a fine example of something-or-other a "miraculous" image of Christ's face on the outside wall of a church in Guatemala City, Guatemala, was worshipped for two weeks before it was discovered to be, actually, a poster of Willie Nelson which had a layer of whitewash over it. Astonished priest, Fr Hector Brogan and psychologist Rodrigo Arago said that they even had reports of "miraculous cures". However, as this story is from the *Weekly World News* (29 Sept 1987) it is impossible to tell if there was genuinely an imitative phenomenon in Guatemala, or whether the *WWN* had simply transposed some elements of the Estill Springs story in one of their typically fantastic flights of... well, to call it journalism would be to dignify it.

➤ **NORTHLAKE, CHICAGO** – A sheet-metal chimney at the Town and Country Bowl is said to have a likeness of Christ upon it. While some admit they can't identify anything at all, others say it is "incredible". "The more you look at it, the more

you can't believe it," said the owner Edwin Korzen. What is happening to the American usage of the English language? I can't make out whether Mr Korzen is cleverly manipulating meanings here. [St Louis (MO) *Post-Dispatch* 27 July 1987.]

➤ **SUPINO, ITALY** – Crowds of pilgrims have flocked to this small village south of Rome since a face of Christ made a "miraculous" appearance on the windowpane of a cottage. Police forensic scientists, asked to investigate its authenticity, discovered that the glass was "just dirty". [R. citing *Corriere Della Sera*, several sources on file.]

➤ **MOUNT SHASTA, CALIFORNIA** – When Diane Boettcher – a 40yr-old writer and drug counselor – changed the channel on her TV after an episode of *Miami Vice*, she didn't expect to turn her home into a mecca for thousands of sight-seers. Instead of a programme she found her screen filled with "a point of light and then a circle, [and] a pattern of rainbow-coloured lights [which] radiate out like wings." Mount Shasta, which many believe has 'mystical' aspects (which could mean about anything) was at that moment one of the centres for the great galactic 'harmonic convergence', and 6,000 had turned out to meditate as the sun came up over the mountain, to avert the doom of mankind. Diane had expected to catch some news about the event, but here, in the land that gave us Haight Ashbury, Manson and hippy heydaze, we should not scorn Diane for leaping to the conclusion that she was seeing an angel.

"She has a beautiful aura... and when you kiss the set her aura gets real bright. She flutters her wings," she said. "Some people tell me it is

an energy transmission from an angelic source," said one of the Convergence Coordinating Committee. "There have been lots of people kissing me and thanking me and asking me for my autograph... People are being emotionally healed," glowed Diane.

Down the mountain a more sober mood prevails. Bob Wilson, owner of Shiloh Electronics, said he identified the problem easily and has duplicated it in his shop for anyone to see. "I didn't say anything in the house because there were people praying in front of the TV and I didn't know how to break it to them."

**Bob Rickard**

## FLIGHT 19: EVIDENCE?

At the end of February 1987, the crew of Mel Fisher's salvage ship *Swordfish* hoisted up the wreckage of a Grumman Avenger (a torpedo bomber used by the US Navy during WW2), 20 miles west of Key West. The disappearance of 'Flight 19' (five TBM-3 Avengers) and a twin-engined Martin Mariner the Navy sent to look for them, is one of the pillars of the 'Bermuda Triangle' canon. Many critics of the Triangle hypothesis have supported a reconstruction of the event in which the 1945 training flight lost its bearings and came down further to the west, and this discovery in 33 feet of water far beyond the supposed western boundary of the Triangle seems to bear the critics out. Fisher's employer, Treasure Salvors Inc, said they had first discovered the wreckage in 1971 during a search for a galleon, and only investigated it out of curiosity when they happened to be in the vicinity again. No human remains were found on board. St Louis (MO) *Post-Dispatch* 1 March 1987.

## STORSJÖN HUNT



Some of the founders of the society for the investigation of the Storsjön monster [*Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten* 5 April 1987.]

A new investigation of Lake Storsjön, in central Sweden, was announced in April by Sten Rentzhog, director of the local Ostersund museum and director of the newly-founded Society for the Investigation of the Great Lake. He said a 12-man team would probe the 243-feet deep lake this summer, possibly using submarines.

Lake Storsjön has a long 'monster' tradition, and sighting reports go back 350 years. Rentzhog's group have collected 400 accounts dating "between 1635 and last month". Lars Thofeldt, a botanist and teacher, said sightings had described "large worm-like creatures... [and creatures] with a long undulating neck with a horse's mane. An interesting feature, in the light of one of Meurger's themes is that one of the earliest accounts says the beast is large enough to coil itself around one of Storsjön's many islands.

*Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten* 5 April; [AP] *Saginaw News* (MI) 10 Apr; [AP] *Nairobi S.Nation* 24 May 1987. For earlier reports from this lake, see FT47 p10; FT46 pp9+43.

## THATCHER OMENS

■ Clouds of algae made a stretch of the sea off Brighton turn red on the day of the general election (11 June). *D.Mirror* 12 June 1987.

■ Concerning British Telecom, on 7 July, Mrs Thatcher declared during Prime Minister's Questions that: "the service we get now is a great deal better than that which we had before [privatisation], and I believe it will be the intention to continue to improve." About an hour later, all the telephones in Whitehall, Parliament and Downing Street went out of order – a cable had broken. *Independent*, *Guardian* 8 July 1987.

■ Anyone suspecting that bits of Thatcher's Britain will begin to look like the Third World should ponder the fact that the assistant director of transport at the Inner London Education Authority is called Rick Shaw. *Guardian* 20 June 1987.

# CRYPTOZOOLOGY CONFERENCE 1987

by MIKE DASH

**E**dinburgh: Auld Reekie itself. The city of Adam Smith, Sir Walter Scott and that rather unpleasant Scott monument. The town famed as the Athens of the North and (if one believes Comyns Beaumont) the true location of the biblical city of Jerusalem.

Well, enough of the travelogue. From the forteen point of view, Edinburgh has offered little of interest since we chronicled an unseasonal fall of snow there on 2 June 1975 [FT12 p5], but on 25 and 26 July 1987 the city hosted the annual conference of the International Society of Cryptozoology, held jointly with the Society for the History of Natural History. It was a two-day affair dealing with 'The search for Nessie in the 1980s' and 'Some cats of cryptozoology', and was held in the impressive surroundings of the Royal Museum of Scotland. Not that the general public were made aware of it – they were ushered into the lecture theatre the back way, through rather a seedy coffee bar, while Society members got to use the front door.

## LOCH NESS RETROSPECTIVE

**T**he three sessions dealing with the Loch Ness phenomenon were a little disappointing, being of an almost exclusively retrospective nature. Dr Paul LeBlond's promised reinterpretation of the 'Surgeon's picture' [see FT46 pp62–5] – a "size determination based on physical principles" – turned out to be no more than a tease for a forthcoming article in the Society's journal *Cryptozoology*. Having explained a little of the mathematics necessary to calculate the size of the 'head and neck' using the distance between backround waves as a reference, LeBlond (a University of British Columbia Oceanographer who used the same technique to analyse the Mansi 'Champ' photo) cut his talk short just as things were getting interesting. He did suggest, however, that the object portrayed was unlikely to be more than 120cm (about 4 feet) high, and during the question session at the end of the day, monster researcher Alastair Boyd quoted from a previously-unrecorded press report in which the

surgeon himself estimated that the head/neck was about three feet out of the water [*Daily Mail* 20 April 1934]. These figures should be compared to Steuart Campbell's estimate of 70cm.

Other speakers trod some very well-worn paths. Richard Fitter, chairman of the Flora & Fauna Preservation Society, opened the proceedings with a brief history of the monster and the Loch Ness Investigation Bureau; he was followed by Roy Mackal, who reappraised the arguments for and against various monster candidates. In this he closely followed the discussion in his book *The monsters of Loch Ness* (1976). Since then, Mackal – whom FT readers will remember in connection with the Congo dinosaur hunt [FT45 p4, FT46 pp5–6, FT47 pp22–5] – has abandoned his favoured 'hypothetical amphibian' theory and added an equally hypothetical zeuglodon – a form of prehistoric whale, serpentine but short-necked – to the list of possibles.

The tempo of the meeting was raised when Prof. Mackal told the audience of 110 about his own, unpublished, monster sighting (1967). Mackal, who described himself as "totally committed and no longer scientifically objective", was converted from scepticism by the sight of a 2–3m long back surfacing close to the boat from which he was servicing LNIB hydrophones. To one side, the tip of what the Chicago biochemist took to be a left pectoral flipper – black, hairless and with "some evidence of wrinkling" – was periodically visible. There was a further surprise when Mackal offered some hope to proponents of the much-debunked 'plesiosaur hypothesis', noting that another reptile, the leatherback turtle, had confounded critics by maintaining its body temperature 17 degrees above the ambient temperature of water only a few degrees warmer than that of Loch Ness, making it theoretically possible for reptiles to survive in cold northern lakes.

Another of Prof. Mackal's newer theories – the migration of monsters through river systems – was introduced to explain the problematical lack of physical remains and likely deterioration of the gene pool among a captive

herd breeding in the lake over a period of several thousand years. Several sighting reports from the River Ness and Beaully Firth were adduced in support of this contention, and the speaker suggested that a specimen might be provided by netting designated Canadian rivers while the salmon were running.

Henry Bauer, who followed Mackal, is the author of a new book on the Loch Ness phenomenon [reviewed on p70]. His 40 minutes were devoted to analysis of public perception of the monster. Although some rather obvious points were made – anomaly reporting is a function of newspaper editorial policy rather than number of sightings; the conservative attitude of the press towards most fortæna slows public acceptance of a phenomenon – the bulk of this paper was devoted to an interesting analysis of newspaper, magazine and periodical reporting of Loch Ness, drawn from an article which Bauer published several years ago in *Cryptozoology*. An examination of national and local newspapers revealed a peak of interest in the period December 1933 – January 1934 which did not correspond to any increase in the number of sightings, but concluded a period of growing certainty that there was at least a case to answer. These two months were succeeded by a rapid decline in serious coverage occasioned by several well-publicised hoaxes. The London *Times*, for example, ran 65 Loch Ness stories in the December–January period, and only one in the next 11 months.

Surveying national and local papers, science journals, popular science magazines and the specialist anomaly press over a 50-year period, Bauer concluded that there had been a generally neutral or slightly disbelieving tone to stories written in the period 1933–54. Thereafter, articles became slightly less jocular and more serious, being most positive in the mid- and late-1970s. An explosion of favourable coverage followed the 1975 Rines photos and the *New York Times*'s 1976 sponsorship of activities at Loch Ness, but it was a period in which UFOs and 'occult' subjects also generated much favourable reporting. Dr Bauer concluded by observing that since we are now in the middle of a reporting 'depression', even fairly dramatic news from the loch might not receive much coverage.

## RECENT INVESTIGATIONS AT LOCH NESS

**T**he afternoon session was given over to three of the most persistent Loch Ness activists. Adrian Shine, field leader of the Loch Ness & Morar Project, took his somewhat

bemused audience on a rapid jog through quite a complex discussion of the Loch's biology and underwater acoustics. In the course of this, he showed underwater TV pictures of the loch bed which illustrated the lack of gas build-up in the floor sediment and tended to undermine the ever-popular 'vegetable mat' explanation for monster sightings. Shine also demonstrated that while there was an abundance of fish near the surface, and surprisingly numerous colonies of eels and char at the bottom, there was nothing to attract a monster to the 'desert water' – empty deep mid-water – in which strong sonar echoes were, perversely, being recorded. This should increase our scepticism of such mid-water contacts, Shine suggested.

Robert Rines, of the Academy of Applied Science, gave an impassioned speech in which he criticised armchair speculators and "book authors". They "do no service to cryptozoology... They don't want to know anything real – it might interfere with their theories," he said. The debunkers were "the enemies of cryptozoology," Rines asserted, and he went on to give his own version of the events of 1972 and 1975 which led to the taking of controversial underwater 'flipper' and 'gargoyle' photos. Rines also brought the Academy's Loch Ness activities up to date and hinted at a future expedition using a piece of "recently declassified" US Government equipment which would see "practically everything" in the loch. He later refused to elaborate on this tantalising piece of information.

Rines was not in Edinburgh to make converts. His own sighting of an "elephant back" hump in the mouth of Urquhart Bay was enough for him, and he told the assembled throng, "I don't care if any of you believe anything. You don't mean anything to me as far as that goes." After all the criticism Rines has had to endure, his belief-centred address was understandable and it was human. It was not, however, scientific, and one shudders to think of its likely reception if delivered to the arch-priests of scientism at the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In front of an audience made up of members of the ISC and the general public, though, Rines went down well and earned himself the loudest and longest applause of the conference.

Monster-hunting veteran Tim Dinsdale was similarly warmly received as he accepted honorary life membership of the ISC. His paper, which concluded the afternoon's entertainment, was a well-illustrated retrospective of 27 years in the field, and included a viewing of the famous 'Dinsdale film' and excerpts from Tim's film archive of witness interviews.

## TAXONOMIC DESCRIPTION OF THE KELLAS CAT

**T**he fields of Scotland were the subject of the first two papers delivered on Sunday. The shorter second day (five papers to the seven delivered on the Saturday) was more interesting and more up-to-date than the Loch Ness sessions – unsurprisingly, given the current vibrancy of alien big cat (ABC) research. Di Francis and Dr Karl Shuker delivered complementary papers to an audience of about 70 in the museum lecture theatre, dealing with British ABCs and particularly the specimens obtained from Dallas, in the Moray area of the Scottish highlands, during the years 1984–5 [see FT45 pp10–12].

Di Francis began with the story of her own involvement with the subject, displaying photos of Welsh ABCs taken from her book, *Cat country* (1983), and playing a recording of the cat's nocturnal cry. She emphasised the importance of field research and pointed out that during the Surrey Puma 'flap', police had thrown out or mis-classified sighting reports which did not match their own idea of what the 'puma' should look like. In fact witnesses reported cats with un-puma-like stripes and red-brown or black coats. Di went on to give an over-view of her field-work in Devon and Scotland. Having described the provenance of the Dallas cats, most of them shot on the Kellas estate of Mr Thomas Christie, she produced a stuffed specimen to much camera clicking.

Dr Karl Shuker of Birmingham University then gave a taxonomic description of the one Kellas specimen he had examined. It had a 65cm long body, a 30cm tail, and stood 36cm high at the shoulder – which made it approximately wildcat-sized. The animal had a squat, broad head with pricked ears and a short, narrow muzzle; it also possessed prominent upper canines similar to those of the clouded leopard and – unlike the leopard – almost equally well-developed lower canines. The Kellas specimen had three supernumary teeth, the same dental complement as that of some wildcats.

In colour the Kellas cat was black, with dark chocolate ventral underhair and prominent long, almost glittery, white guard hairs. Its tail was shorter than that of a wildcat, and unlike the tails of domestic cats it did not taper towards the tip. The animal's most striking physical feature was its noticeably long limbs, the hind legs being particularly powerful. The skeletal features of the ABC showed individual similarities to both domestic cats and wildcats, but was not entirely like either. Its gut-length was short, like a wildcat's.

An unpublished British Museum (Natural History) assessment of the Kellas cats and atypical Advie specimen, prepared by Daphne Hills, concluded that the mounted Kellas cat displayed by Di Francis was probably a melanistic European wildcat, though it could also be either a feral animal or a feral/wildcat cross. The Advie cat was, Hills thought, probably a hybrid.

Dr Shuker was bolder in his analysis. He pointed out that the four Kellas specimens so far obtained were too similar to each other to be part of a population of breeding ferals, in which wide differences would be expected between offspring. Hybrids, he said, certainly did exist in abundance, but again the uniformity of the Kellas cats made him doubt that feral/wildcat crosses were the explanation. The hybrid captured by a *Tomorrow's World* team [FT47 p14] was also markedly dissimilar to the Kellas animals, Shuker said. That animal was larger, stouter, and had shorter limbs and smaller teeth than the Kellas specimen he had examined.

Melanistic wildcats were also improbable candidates, Dr Shuker continued. Wildcat behaviour did not match that reported from the Dallas area, the Kellas cats hunting in pairs, by day, and preferring to catch fish rather than hunt mammals. Unlike wildcats, the Kellas animals were not arboreal, and witnesses described them as "loping gracefully" rather than prowling in the manner approved by the average wildcat.

Instead Shuker favoured a "more daring, speculative hypothesis", pointing out some striking similarities between the Moray ABCs and a peculiar Transcaucasian wildcat described by the Russian zoologist Satunin in the 1920s and later explained away as the misidentification of an existing species by his country's scientific establishment. Dr Shuker suggested that the Transcaucasian and Moray ABC communities could be relics of a previously widely-distributed species, possibly introduced to Britain by the Romans. (There is a little philological evidence to support this contention in Scottish place-names, as well as an intriguing folkloric tradition of jet-black Highland 'fairy cats'.) The Kellas cats seem to occupy a different ecological niche to the wildcat, Shuker observed, pointing out that their long legs, powerful hind-quarters and non-retractable claws indicated "a running mode of existence". He concluded that it was possible that they were indeed members of a new, previously unknown species, and called for field-work to investigate "a most important new zoological discovery" in its natural environment.



## KING CHEETAHS AND MEXICAN ONZAS

**T**he Kellas paper was the most exciting delivered at the conference, but it was succeeded by some interesting offerings concerning big cats in southern Africa and Mexico. The naturalists Lena and Paul Bottriell described their search for the 'King Cheetah', or 'hyena-leopard', reported in the Zimbabwe area for the last hundred years or so, and given (temporary) generic status in 1929. The King Cheetah appears to be a mutant leopard, they said, for although its markings resemble those of the cheetah proper, with the addition of black dorsal stripes, examination of coat samples showed that the King Cheetah had the leopard's 'petal pattern' hair. The cheetah was, in addition, the least adaptable of the big cats, and had produced only three credible mutations in the past – one white animal reported from India, a single red-spotted cheetah suffering from partial albinism, and a pale or lesser spotted specimen skinned in 1926.

Historically, said Lena Bottriell, the King Cheetah was "not a throwback but a development of something" – a recent development, but a puzzling one because all 40 specimens so far obtained were very similar, which generally meant that mutation was an unlikely explanation. However, the rapidly-changing habitat of the animals might encourage unusually rapid evolution. Observing that the King Cheetah's emergence coincided with a dramatic decline in the cheetah population, she and her husband suggested that the new animal might be an emerging leopard subspecies manifesting itself as a mutation, and taking advantage of the widespread eradication of the cheetah proper to take over its ecological niche. The King Cheetah's colouring also indicates that it is adapting to life in woodlands rather than the open grasslands previously favoured by most big cats. "There never was a more lucid example of evolution happening before your eyes," the Bottriells concluded.

J. Richard Greenwell, the ISC's Secretary, and Troy Best, a New Mexico mammalogist, then delivered a rather similar paper on the onza, a puma-like animal occasionally reported from the Mexican highlands and elsewhere since the early sixteenth century. A few supposed onzas had been shot, and a book on the subject had been written in 1961 (receiving hostile reviews), but it was generally asserted that these longer, leaner carcasses were merely emaciated pumas – a hypothesis supported by the unusually wide variations observable among the 1,700 puma specimens in American

collections. Even if the onza was a real animal, it was agreed, it was so similar to the puma that it could be easily mistaken for one.

In 1985 Greenwell learned of a supposed onza which had been shot by a rancher in the Sinaloa area of Mexico; this, and a second, much better preserved, animal killed in January 1986 gave him and his colleagues the opportunity to conduct a thorough scientific examination of a good specimen. They concluded that the better-preserved big cat was a female onza which had been in good health, and was not merely a starving puma. Comparison with museum fossil collections showed that the onza was not, as had been suggested, a relic from the Pleistocene but was indeed an animal very similar to the modern puma. Rejecting the hypotheses that it was a sub-species of puma or a puma-jaguar hybrid, Greenwell and Best concluded that the onza is probably either a new species, possibly one evolving to fill the ecological niche left by the now-extinct American cheetah, or (less likely) a breeding mutation. [A detailed account, by Greenwell, was published in the July 1987 issue of *BBC Wildlife*.]

The last paper of the conference concerned the Queensland tiger, the vicious striped ABC reported from the north-east Australian coast since 1871, and supposed by some researchers to be surviving specimens of the marsupial lion *Thylacoleo*. By now the programme was running almost an hour late and the author, Dr Victor Albert of Brown University, Rhode Island, delivered his address to a dwindling audience. Several delegates had to leave to catch trains, and since your correspondent was one of those who dwindled for this reason, FT is unable to bring you a full report of what promised to be a very interesting paper. Dr Albert did, however, suggest that he was going to update Bernard Heuvelmans' writings on the subject with some new evidence indicating that *Thylacoleo* might indeed have survived into modern times.

[Our correspondent Jim Darroch was able to stay till the end of the conference. He writes that "the evidence for the Queensland Tiger does indeed seem to be sketchy. For instance, the last 'sighting' was in 1973 and no one has ever obtained any actual physical evidence of said tiger (which, incidentally, is the size of a domestic cat). The habitat is dense forest, which ensures rapid deterioration of remains."]

Overall, then, an interesting event made worthwhile by an important update of British ABC reports. Hopefully as cryptozoology establishes itself the ISC will be able to present programmes which include more fieldwork, more analysis and fewer retrospectives.

# BRAZILIAN SPOOKLIGHTS

by CYNTHIA NEWBY LUCE

I live in a remote Brazilian mountain village – a stranger in a strange land. I thought I was lucky to pay only \$2,600 for 66 acres, plus a spring with superb water. The locals were laughing behind my back at the stupid ‘gringo’ who paid so much for a piece of haunted land!

Soon I was cautiously asked if I’d seen the ‘*Mae de Ouro*’ (mother of gold). Finally someone explained to me that for at least 150 years people had been seeing a light, usually a yellow-orange glowing ball slightly smaller than a volley ball, making a slow pass across the face of the hill. It usually passed behind the house I had built. Since this is a land full of semi-legends of ghosts, and the local voodoo-type religion (Macumba, Umbanda, Condomble) entails a type of very tangible possession, I dismissed the discreet enquiries with a shrug. In my subsequent extensive travels throughout Brazil I have found the *Mae de Ouro* legend to be ubiquitous and ingrained in the culture. One follows the *Mae de Ouro* and the first body of water it crosses – river, creak or stream – is where one should look for gold. And gold is found often enough to keep interest and belief in the phenomenon alive.

The first time I saw the light on my land was one evening in June 1980 around 7.45 pm. There were five witnesses: my daughter aged eight, myself, two maids and the gardener. A yellow-orange glowing ball, slightly smaller than a standard volley ball, passed from east to west with the wavering flight of a butterfly about five feet off the ground. It was about thirty feet away from us and was passing between the garage and the house. It made a wide curving turn and headed off towards the stables and vegetable garden near the spring. My gardener, fascinated, went after it. Foolishly he reached out to touch it. The ball faded away to nothing as he put out his hand, then reappeared about fifteen feet ahead of him. He came back to the house rather unnerved because the phenomenon seemed to him to have intelligence.

I have not personally seen the light again, but my servants have seen it numerous times in the past seven years. It even swooped down on my cook as she hung out some clothes early one evening, and nearly hit her head. The phenomenon seems to prefer the colder dry months, but I have also recorded its appearance

in the hot wet season (November through April). It has even appeared in light rain. It also appears any time of night from dusk to dawn.

The villagers have become more interested in unravelling the mystery since I’ve been so voluble in an effort to dispel any superstitious attitudes, telling them that physicists and researchers all over the world are interested in what is widely seen as a natural phenomenon. Hardly a month passes now without at least one villager telling me of a sighting. The colour is usually reported as yellow-orange, but sometimes as blue-white; it usually, but not always, travels from east to west; and the size also varies. Reported size is to some degree, of course, dependent upon distance; from my hill across the valley to the village is about 1,200 feet as the crow flies.

During the recent UFO flap, which began before the much-publicised sightings by the Brazilian military in May 1986 and continued after the government-imposed media blackout, the number of balls-of-light sightings (some tracing a zig-zag course which may put them in a different category) has increased significantly here in the village. I cannot tell how much of this was due to excitement generated by the press; but between April and August seven people sought me out to tell me of their sightings. One neighbour saw a yellowish ball of light surrounded by a glowing medium blue about an inch thick. It passed less than ten feet from him and went off in the direction of my land.

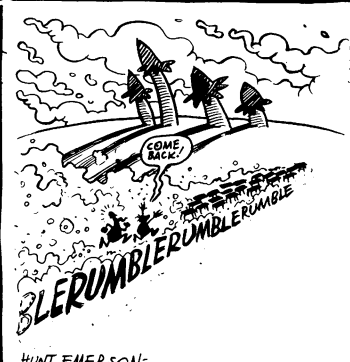
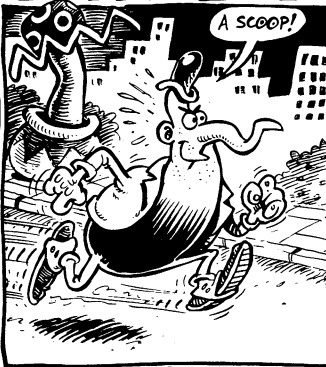
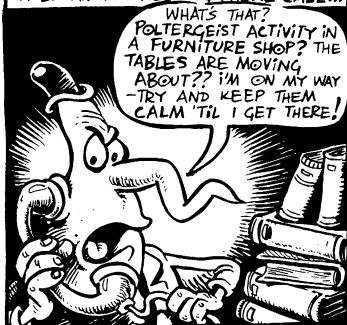
After talking to a geologist friend with first-hand knowledge of the phenomenon, I’ve been trying to borrow or rent a metal or mineral detector to see whether the underlying rock, which is mostly granite, has a vein of iron which, by itself or in combination with the numerous springs, may influence the appearance of the phenomenon. I might add that this area is probably the least likely in the world to experience earthquakes, and the methane hypothesis I’ve also found to be invalid in this area.

If any FT readers have any questions, ideas or information, please contact me.

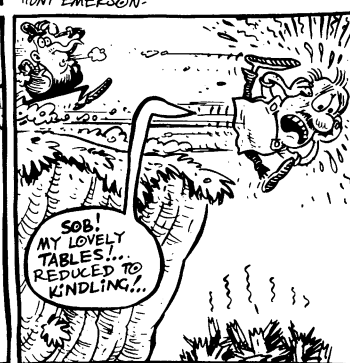
Cynthia Newby Luce,  
Sitio Tibet, Municipio de Petropolis,  
Sao Jose do Rio Preto, Estado do Rio 25.790,  
Brazil.

# PHENOMENOMIX

TOP FORTHEAN REPORTER GULLY BULL  
TAKES AN INTERESTING PHONE CALL...



HUNT EMMERSON:



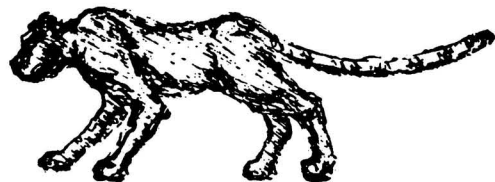
# THE RIDDLES OF OZ

by TONY HEALY

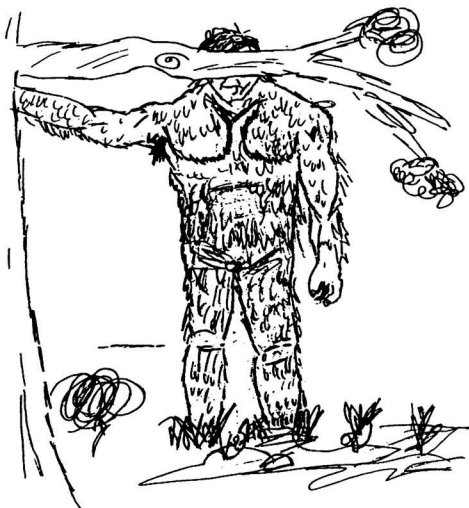
**A**s most forteans already know, Australia wasn't exactly standing behind the door when God handed out the Mysterious Monsters. As well as our centuries-old Bigfoot-style mystery (the riddle of the hairy – and damnably elusive – Yowie), we have swamp and river monster legends (the dreaded Bunyips) plus a long tradition of Alien Big Cat (ABC) reports which are strikingly similar to the Surrey Puma / Exmoor Beast tales and the American "Black Panther" stories. FT has suggested that all you Bigfoot buffs, Nessie freaks and ABseers might like an update on the creature situation Down under. So here goes.

In FT44, Bob remarked that the ABC phenomenon is one of Britain's biggest contemporary unsolved mysteries. The same applies presently here in Oz: mystery moggie sightings, replete with bloody tales of stock depredation, are by far our most common type of alien animal report. They come in regularly from as far north as Cape York in Queensland; from coastal and central NSW; from Victoria and from many parts of Western Australia.

Oz big cats come in all colours, but are usually jet black. In an analysis of 70 randomly-selected reports, Paul Cropper, Australia's leading cat chronicler and Bunyip buster, found that the colour and pelt markings were: black 46 (65.7%); fawn / ginger / sandy / brown 14 (20%); grey / white 5 (7.1%); striped 4 (5.7%); spotted 1 (1.5%). Eyewitness guesstimates of size indicate that your average Aussie ABC is slightly larger than a German shepherd. Paul and I have paw-print casts ranging from cougar-size to leopard-size. Presently the hottest areas appear to be around Cordering in WA, where the "Cordering Cougar" continues – since about 1972 – to cut a bloody swathe through the local sheep population, and in the Kangaroo Valley (NSW) area.



'Leopard-like' big cat seen and sketched by zoologist Dr Per Seglen in Western Australia in 1982. *Perth Western Australian* 24 Aug 1982.



Yowie sketched by Adam Marion and friend after their sighting near Cooma (NSW) in 1982. The branch was approximately six feet six inches off the ground.



Kos Guines – Nemesis of Yowies.

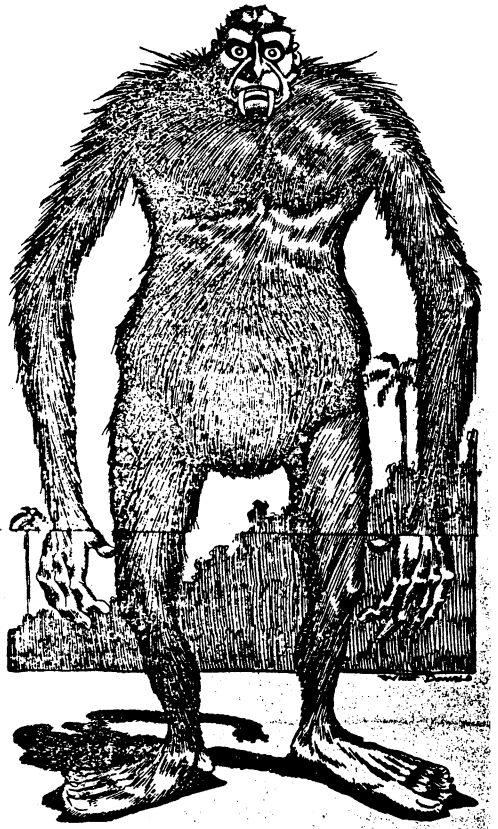
The best recent sighting in my own area occurred in November 1984, when a local fishing writer, Graham Pike (!), was quietly fly-fishing along the banks of Burra Creek, just 20 km south of Canberra. The time was 7 pm – broad daylight at that time of year. The range was 70 metres.

“It was lying next to the water on a large flat rock”, he said. “I think we spotted each other simultaneously.” The creature was dark reddish-brown in colour with sharp pointed ears, lynx-like mutton-chop whiskers, paws which seemed proportionately rather too large and a long sweeping tail. It seemed a little bigger than the proverbial German shepherd. After giving Graham a rather dirty look, the creature walked slowly away. “I could see it was no known big cat”, said the flummoxed fisherman. “It looked more or less like a cross between a lynx and a leopard.”

Encounters with the Yowie (aka Yahoo, Doolegard, Dulagal, Quinkin, etc.) [1] seem a lot rarer than those with ABCs, but when they do happen they can be pretty exciting – as when Kos Guines bumped into one near Pambula (NSW) in 1977. Mr Guines, rabbit hunting with his sons one bright summer evening, was walking quietly down a gully when he was startled by a crash in the bracken. “I swung round”, he told me, “anticipating perhaps a kangaroo, and saw a large hairy creature 30 metres away.”

At that time, Mr Guines, a Greek immigrant, had never even heard of the Yowie legend: “All I could think of was ‘My God! A gorilla!’” It was the height of a small man, “but much, much broader”. Its head sat right down on its shoulders in classic Sasquatch / Bigfoot style. Mr G let fly and blasted it in the back with his shotgun as it turned away, but it “didn’t even flinch or make a sound – just charged away through the bracken”. (Maybe after teleporting, tight-lipped and puce-faced through the cosmos, scattering falls of lead shot in its wake, it let out an almighty bellow on its arrival back in Canada – scaring the socks off Rene Dahinden and the local chipmunks.)

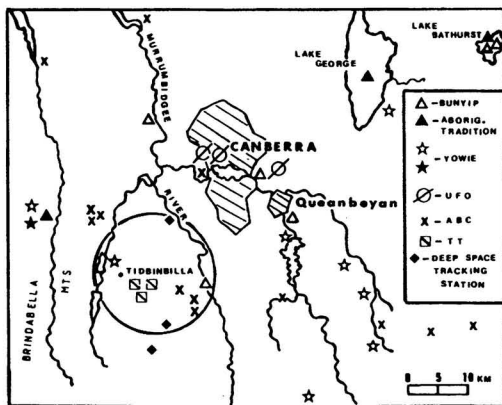
Modern Bunyip reports are as scarce as hens’ teeth, but some interesting stories came out of my local area last century, as when, in 1821, Hamilton Hume, one of Australia’s greatest explorers, told the Philosophical Society of Australia that he had seen something resembling “the manatee or hippopotamus” in swampy, 5 km-long Lake Bathurst [2]. Two years later, pioneer settler E.S.Hall stated that he had seen it too – and that it had a three-foot-long neck, a head like a bulldog and made a noise like a porpoise. He added that the local Aboriginals often told of encounters with the “devil-devil” which had a reputation for eating children [3].



A Yowie – “The Bombala Anthropoid – a specimen of the tribe, drawn by Will Diamond from a description given by Mr Charles Harper”. *The Sydney Sun* 10 Nov 1912.

The old Bunyip stories are frustrating in many ways. There seems no doubt that many Aboriginals and numerous white pioneers genuinely believed they’d seen awesome entities in various lakes and rivers; but, unfortunately, unlike the (in general) nicely uniform descriptions of Nessie, Ogopogo, Champ and co., the Bunyip descriptions are often bizarrely inconsistent.

The problem with Aboriginal witnesses - who described the creatures as resembling anything from emus to scaly quadrupeds - seemed to be that, as the anthropologist Brough Smith remarked in his *Aboriginals of Victoria*, “they appear to have been in such dread of it as to have been unable to take note of its characteristics”. The whites’ testimony was likewise very



AUSTRALIA'S MONSTER-HAUNTED CAPITAL

Map by Tony Healy.



Tiddinbilla Peak – Yowie/Panther/Bunyip/Thylacine country.

jumbled, in their case by many rather obvious hoaxes and tall stories.

About all that can be said with any confidence is that, although there are occasional references to humped backs or long necks, perhaps 40% of reports seem to describe something resembling a manatee or seal – though often rather hairier. Almost all the Bunyips of the Canberra area fell into this category, but since, to reach here via the Murray River system, seals would have to swim roughly 1,400 miles from the sea, I would say they would just about have qualified for OOPA status anyway.

Thanks to the work of John Keel, Coleman & Clarke, the Bords and many others, most fortians are now aware that in North America reports of Bigfoot, lake monsters and “black panthers” often seem – against all the odds of probability – to be tightly concentrated in rather small, well-defined areas. These same ‘window areas’ often produce reports of even weirder critters (mermaids, ‘little Indians’, Big Birds, etc.) as well as an inordinate number of UFO flaps. The same thing seems to happen here in Oz. As you can see from the map, my local area has Yowie and ABC reports mixed together and scattered rather liberally all over the place, interspersed with old Bunyip reports and the occasional UFO sighting [4]. While there is plenty to keep a cryptozoologist interested around Canberra (which is a small – population 250,000 – city bounded by grazing land, scrub and the huge mountainous wilderness of the Namadgi-Kosciusko National Park), it is certainly not the hottest area in the country for alien animals.

There is one local spot, however, which may come close to being a ‘window area’. It is worth looking at, in any case, because it provides an

example of a type of alien animal report unique (almost) [5] to Australia. The circle drawn on the map, covering a radius of 10 km in the vicinity of Tiddinbilla, encompasses not only three ABC reports, one Bunyip and one Yowie (plus several other unmarked rumours and ‘possibles’), but also three very closely-grouped Tasmanian Tiger (Thylacine) sightings.

The main ‘tiger’ eyewitness, National Parks ranger Peter Simon, who has patrolled the area for the last seven years, is adamant that the creature that he observed – at a range of 30 metres, in broad daylight, for several seconds – could have been nothing but a Thylacine.

While the TT – a distinctively striped marsupial wolf – may or may not be extinct in Tasmania (where no one has succeeded in trapping, shooting or photographing one since the 1930s), it is definitely in the alien animal category on the mainland. I have four reasons for saying this:

- 1 – Palaeontologists agree that it became extinct on the mainland several thousand years ago, after the Aboriginals introduced the dingo.
- 2 – Alleged modern mainland sightings are never provable and sometimes occur in suspiciously close proximity to other types of AA reports (e.g. in Western Australia several TT reports have come from the epicentre of the ‘Cordinger Cougar’ activity.)
- 3 – The testimony of mainland TT eyewitnesses occasionally contains slightly ‘odd’ elements which are reminiscent of some of the weirder types of BHM, ABC and lake monster reports. According to the *Perth Sunday Express*, 25 June 1982, for instance, Syd and Ian Slee, who have had fowls and kangaroos killed – and decapitated – by TTs, say that they know





A Bunyip – as imagined by the illustrator Henry Ford in Andrew Lang's *Brown Fairy Book* [1904].

the Thylacines are around when they get a 'prickly feeling' in the hairs on the back of their necks.

● 4 – Hunting dogs, which enthusiastically assisted man in slaying the Thylacines in Tasmania, sometimes show uncharacteristic yellow streaks on facing the mainland variety. The night after his sighting near Tidbinbilla, for instance, Ranger Simon staked out the area and heard, coming from the bush, very strange harsh panting sounds. His dogs, which have been in at the death of over 300 wild pigs, absolutely refused to get out of the truck.

**A**s well as the occasional tight geographical pattern, as at Tidbinbilla, there may be a rough chronological pattern to Oz AA reports. As long ago as 1940, a pioneering Australian cryptozoologist, Mr R. McKay, a man way ahead of his time, noticed the connection between ABCs and Yowies. Paul Cropper has in his files a letter from Mr McKay to a Mr Estoppey dated 22 April 1940:

*Dear Mr Estoppey,*

*Many thanks for your letter... re panther seen at Trentham... perhaps these animals come in waves... I'm sure that before long you will hear of a big gorilla-like animal somewhere in Gippsland.*

In a very general way, Paul Cropper's enormous AA files and statistics tend to agree with Mr McKay's 'wave' theory:

● 1 – Bunyip sightings, all the rage from the 1820s to about the 1880s, have hardly been reported at all this century.

● 2 – Although dramatic outbreaks of Yowie activity still occur, the hey-day of the Oz BHM seems to have been from the early 1870s to about 1912.

● 3 – Oz ABCs, though mentioned in northern Queensland as early as 1871 [6], didn't really get their act together until the 'Emmaville Panther' massacre (sic) of the early 1960s. Since then they have gone from strength to strength.

Could it be that the mainland TT reports, which apparently began about ten years ago [7] and appear to be increasing, will turn out to be the new wave which will supersede ABCs on the Oz AA scene? Only the Cosmic Zookeeper knows for sure.

In fact, come to think of it, there may be an even newer phenomenon starting to peek through southern window areas. Paul Cropper's favourite hunting ground, the Kangaroo Valley area, has recently produced – in addition to many and various reports of ABCs, Bunyips, UFOs, little people, TTs and Yowies – a full-fledged BVM outbreak, complete with apparitions, seers, cures and a holy spring. I'll leave that story for Paul to tell in a later update from Oz.

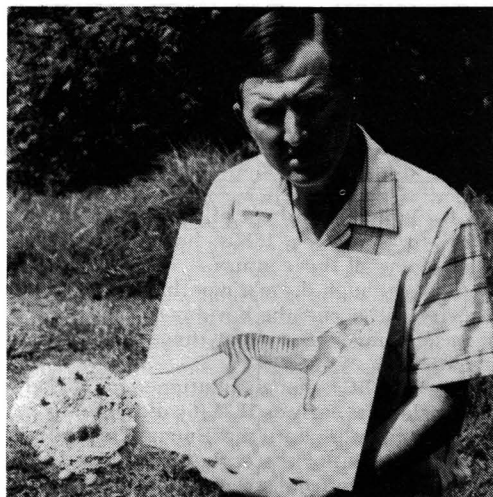
NOTES OVERLEAF

## NOTES

■ 1 - Other Yowie aliases can be found in Graham Joyner: *The Hairy Man of South-Eastern Australia*. ■ 2 - Bernard Heuvelmans: *On the Track of Unknown Animals*, p.134. ■ 3 - *The Sydney Gazette* 27 Mar 1823. ■ 4 - For those who think they may be of significance, I have marked the location of three deep-space tracking stations which beam out huge amounts of microwaves in the Tidbinbilla area. I've also shown that the area is bounded to the north and west by water reservoirs, and to the east by one of Australia's largest rivers. It might also be worth mentioning that by Oz standards the Canberra area is fairly active seismically. ■ 5 - On 7 April 1974, Joan Gilbert reported seeing a Thylacine crossing Western Avenue, Branksome, Dorset (*Bournemouth Evening Echo* 7 April 1974; *Alien Animals* p.59; FT9, p19). ■ 6 - *On the Track of Unknown Animals*, p.142. ■ 7 - There are a few earlier 'tiger' stories: Paul Cropper has a single report from 1949 plus notes on a small outbreak in the 1960s.

# ON THE TRAIL OF A 'TIGER'

by REX GILROY



Rex Gilroy holds a thylacine sketch and a plaster cast of one of two sets of tracks found near the Grose Valley, identified as thylacine.



Wilfred Batty with the last known 'tiger' shot in the wild. [From Beresford and Bailey: *Search for the Tasmanian Tiger* 1981.]

**I**n June 1984, accompanied by my wife and a film crew, I was dropped by helicopter into a remote area of northern Tasmania, to investigate a report that a small colony of the Tasmanian 'tiger', or Thylacine, existed there. The expedition drew a blank, as in the past, but the search goes on.

For 25 years I have been searching the Australian bush for living proof that this "extinct" creature still survives on the mainland. There are three reasons why I believe this search is worthwhile. First, there are a lot of reports of large striped dog-like animals, possibly thylacines, coming from over a wide area of the rugged eastern Australian mountain

ranges, from far north Queensland through New South Wales to eastern Victoria. Second, plaster casts have been made of tracks found on the mainland which compare with others from Tasmania, leaving little doubt as to the animal's identity.

Third, I had a personal sighting of a thylacine. At 10.15 pm on 22 February 1972, a friend and I were driving along the Great Western Highway just south of Blackheath towards Katoomba in the rugged Blue Mountains west of Sydney, New South Wales. As we passed thick roadside scrub, an animal almost the size of a full-grown Alsatian dog, with fawn-coloured fur and a row of blackish stripes, ran across the highway in front of the car. For a few seconds it stood there in the glare of the headlights before running off into the scrub, towards the Grose Valley nearby. I have no doubt that it was a thylacine: its appearance matched that of

stuffed specimens preserved in Government museums.

A full-grown thylacine measures 2 metres from head to tail, standing about 55 cm, with a rigid kangaroo-like tail which does not wag. The body narrows at the flanks like a greyhound, and the male has a larger and thinner face than the female. Males tend to have from 9 to 11 stripes, beginning at mid-back and ending at the tail rump, while female stripes number 18 to 22, beginning at the neck base and ending at the rump. The female's pouch faces the rear, allowing her young to be protected from injury as she moves through undergrowth.

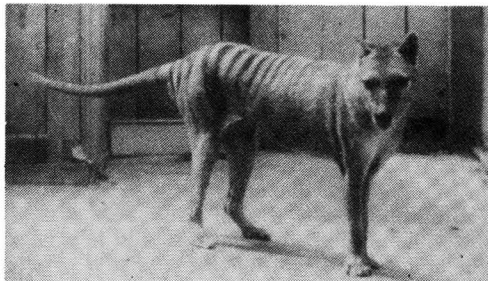
These creatures are secretive, and with the inaccessibility of their mountainous habitats it is no wonder that little evidence of their survival is available. Small colonies of four to eight individuals could exist in eastern Australia, and there might be a population of 600 or more. Their breeding habits are largely unknown, but early observations suggested mating occurs in summer when three or four young are born, although young were found in the pouch at all months of the year. The young probably have a life in the pouch of about four months and then run with the mother, hiding while she hunts for food.

The last known 'tiger' was killed by Wilfred Batty on his Mawbanna (Tasmania) farm in 1930, and the last captive specimen died in Hobart Zoo in 1934.

Sightings of thylacine-type animals have occurred throughout the Blue Mountains for generations, with at least a dozen round the town of Springwood in recent years. In 1975 one Springwood farmer reported attacks on his hencoop by a large striped dog-like animal, and almost shot it as it escaped over a fence with a hen in its mouth. In April 1983 a similar animal was reported making raids on a Kanimbla Valley farm.

In March 1982 a camper sighted a greyish creature about two metres long with about a dozen blackish stripes, drinking from a creek in the Grose Valley. I later led some naturalists on a search of the area, but we gave up after three days of fighting through the thick scrub.

North of the Grose Valley lies a vast and still largely unexplored wilderness, an eerie region of forest-covered mountains, valleys and swamps. In September 1983, I led a search into this region in a convoy of three 4-wheel drive vehicles. On a muddy bank of a remote swamp we found various marsupial tracks, including two unusual sets which resembled those of a dog but displayed marsupial features. Plaster casts were made and later matched with others found in Tasmania in 1974 whose peculiar paw struc-



The last thylacine in captivity, which died in Hobart Zoo in 1934. [Beresford and Bailey, op. cit.]

ture identified them as thylacine.

We returned to the swamp in February 1986, and found more tracks. The swamp is surrounded by dense scrub at the foot of a deep gully encased by steep cliffs. There is a maze of rock crevices and caverns in which any animal could live unseen. One set of tracks on the swamp edge show the animal had walked round the swamp's muddy bank before drinking, then retraced its steps back towards the gully.

Later, above the gully, we came across tracks of a full-grown animal, apparently female, beside which were those of a young cub. These were at least several hours old. In the dense scrub we came across signs of a wide-ranging scuffle between a wild pig and a thylacine, as indicated by dozens of tracks, which were only half an hour old. Nearby, we found a pile of day-old excrement containing pig bristles and crushed pig bone. Had it been left by a thylacine? It appears that a colony of six to eight of these creatures exists in the gully. A photographic surveillance of the swamp is being set up in the hope of capturing at least one 'tiger' on film.



The coat of arms of Tasmania, with thylacine supporters. [Beresford and Bailey, op. cit.]

# TASADAY, TAU'T BATU AND THUNDERSTONES

by Mr. X

**I**n March 1987, I paid several visits to the National Museum of the Philippines in Manila. One question for which I sought confirmation or denial was if the discoveries of the Tasaday or Tau't Batu tribes were the result of hoaxes [See FT47, p4.]

On the third floor of the museum there are two photographic displays of the Tasaday and Tau't Batu. The Tasaday are also listed as one of several tribal groups in the exhibit of the 'People of the Philippines' in the National Museum and in the Ayala Museum in the Makati district of Manila.

The National Museum guides and interpreters were most helpful about displayed artifacts and I was invited to see other exhibits not on public display. Without hesitation I was brought into the office of Dr Jesus T. Peralta, curator of the Anthropology Department. Though interested by the FT article, he was definitely unamused by the inference that the Tau't Batu might be a hoax and the repetition of the accusation made a year earlier that the Tasaday tribe really did not exist.

"To be taken in by such a fraud would be professional suicide", he stated emphatically. He went on to describe the Tasaday and Tau't Batu as relatively isolated groups which had assimilated members from outside, whose origins had been traced, but this factor did not mean that the tribes and their culture were not distinctive, and certainly not the result of a hoax. He blamed the newspaper stories on 'political' rivals and not as a challenge upon his professional research. He had also received correspondence from colleagues following an American television programme's (20/20) unsubstantiated presentation of the hoax claims.

Dr Peralta has written of the contacts of these tribes, depicted as primitive cave-dwellers, with the outside world. In "The Tau't Batu: A pattern in transhumance" [*Tau't Batu Studies*, monograph 7], p93, he says: "All in all, it may be concluded that the group is not at all living in complete isolation in the Singnapan basin for there were existing

sociological, political and economic channels through which interaction may and actually did take place. The existing social structure shows it to be an open society with recruitment not limited by ethnicity. Pala-wan individuals from outside who married into the group have, in fact, integrated well into the Tau't Batu lifestyle to the extent that it is difficult to isolate visually a non-Tau't Batu from one. This indicates the facility with which recruitment from outside is accomplished with no discernable disruption in the order within the community." During the initial contact in 1978, some households of the Tau't Batu fled the area seeking "refuge with relations outside the basin" when invaded by National Museum and PANAMIN (Presidential Assistant on National Minorities) officials. The isolation of the Tau't Batu is not the result of geographic remoteness so much as their decision to live apart from their neighbours.

Some facts about the Tau't Batu should be stated which have been erroneously portrayed. When discovered by staff of the National Museum in 1978, during preparations for a visit by President Marcos and his family to the Tabon caves, they consisted of 87 people whose principal marriage groups (bulan- bulan) could best be defined by their shared residence in five different caves. It has long been assumed that cave dwellers lacked or never developed architectural skills; but the Tau't Batu constructed raised platforms and fireplaces within the caves. These caves provide shelter from the rain and winds of monsoons, but during the remainder of the year the tribe prefer to live near their crops in 'modest versions' of Pala-wan houses.

Palawan island is part of the Sunda Shelf, and thus geologically associated with Borneo and not the Philippine islands. The large crater in which the Tau't Batu live is not an extinct volcano but a gigantic sinkhole of limestone formed by the paleo-Somuron river as the land rose out of the sea. The tribe speaks a dialect of Pala-wan, uses slash-and-burn cultivation in addition to hunting (with the use of blowguns)

and fishing, and wear a bark cloth when woven cloth cannot be obtained through trading. Only two women were seen wearing bead necklaces, which contrasts with the use of shell jewelry by Pala-wan women. Men usually carry a small kit containing tobacco shreds, leaf wrappers, and a strike-a-light (iron, chert and tinder). One of the more important discoveries was of petroglyph drawings made with charcoal in the Ugpay cave, which were declared to be national treasures by Marcos, for they are rare in the Philippines. They resemble the incised petroglyphs found in the Angono rockshelter in Rizal province. Two publications on this tribe are available from the National Museum: *Tau't Batu: People of the Rock* (20 pesos) and *Tau't Batu Studies* (98 pesos), the latter of which is now available through the INFO research library.

In addition to the Tasaday and Tau't Batu tribes, Dr Peralta was able to confirm another curious display found in the 'People of the Philippines' exhibit, described as follows:

"*Punamahan*. These distinctive carved boxes are containers of ritual paraphernalia of the Ifugao ritual practitioner or Membunung, [which] include among other offerings of areca

nut, lime; *talismans like neolithic stone adzes called bab-an di kidul or teeth of the lightning*; crocodile teeth, and other things that provide the ritual practitioner more control over the spirit world."

When asked about these 'bab-an di kidul', he told me the stones were associated more with the sound of thunder than with the flash of lightning. I advised him that there were many reports of 'thunderstones' in Europe and elsewhere. When I said one of the common explanations was that these objects were simply uncovered by lightning or rain on the ground, but there were also many accounts of their being found in trees, this struck him as strange; for he insisted that most of the 'bab-an di kidul' were found in trees, yet did not venture to explain how the neolithic objects got there.

Based only upon secondary newspaper reports (the original *Manila Times* articles could not be found in the National Library whose collection is incomplete), it would be a rash assumption to treat the Tasaday and Tau't Batu tribes as hoaxes, and fortune-tellers should look past newspaper headlines when confronted with 'hoax revealed'.

## SON OF A GUN

Reader A.G.Gordon sent us the following extraordinary account of an 'immaculate', if somewhat inconvenient and unexpected, conception, from *The Lancet* of 2 January 1875 (p35), which repeated it in full, because of its great curiosity value, from the *American Medical Weekly* of 7 November 1874. The article, headed ATTENTION GYNAECOLOGISTS! was written by 'A field and hospital surgeon, C.S.A.', and reads as follows:

*On the 12th of May, 1863, the battle of R. was fought. Gen. G.'s brigade met the advance of Grant's army, under General L., about one mile from the village of R. About three hundred yards in rear of my regiment was situated a fine residence, the occupants being a matron, her two daughters, and servants (the host being absent in another army). About 3 o'clock p.m., when the battle was raging most furiously, the above-mentioned lady and her two daughters (aged respectively fifteen and seventeen), filled with interest and enthusiasm, stood bravely in front of their homestead, ready and eager to minister to their wounded countrymen should they fall in the dreadful fray.*

*Our men were fighting nobly, but pressed*

*by superior numbers, had gradually fallen back to within one hundred and fifty yards of the house. My position being near my regiment, suddenly I beheld a noble, gallant young friend staggering closer, and then fall to the earth. In the same moment a piercing scream from the house reached my ear! I was soon by the side of the young man, and, upon examination, found a compound fracture, with extensive comminution of the left tibia; the ball having ricocheted from these parts, and, in its onward flight, passed through the scrotum, carrying away the left testicle. Scarcely had I finished dressing the wounds of this poor fellow, when the esteemable matron came running to me in the greatest distress, begging me to go to one of her daughters, who, she informed me, had been badly wounded a few minutes before. Hastening to the house, I found that the eldest [sic] of the young ladies had indeed received a most serious wound. A minnie ball had penetrated the left abdominal parietes, about midway between the umbilicus and anterior spinal process of the ilium, and was lost in the abdominal cavity, leaving a ragged wound behind. Believing there was little or no hope of her recovery, I had only time to prescribe an anodyne, when our army*

fell back, leaving both field and village in the hands of the enemy.

Having remained with my wounded in the village of R., I had the opportunity of visiting the young lady the next day, and, interruptedly, for a period of nearly two months, at the end of which time she had entirely recovered, with no untoward symptoms during treatment; save a severe peritonitis, she seemed as well as ever!

About six months after her recovery, the movements of our army brought me again to the village of R., and I was again sent for to see the young lady. She appeared in excellent health and spirits, but her abdomen had become enormously enlarged, so much so as to resemble pregnancy at the seventh or eighth month. Indeed, had I not known the family and the facts of the abdominal wound, I should have so pronounced the case. Under the above circumstances, I failed to give a positive diagnosis, determining to keep the case under surveillance. This I did.

Just two hundred and seventy-eight days from the date of the receipt of the wound by the minnie ball, I delivered this same young lady of a fine boy, weighing eight pounds. I was not very much surprised; but imagine the surprise and mortification of the young lady herself, her entire family. This can be better imagined than described. Although I found the hymen intact in my examination before delivery, I gave no credence to the earnest and oft-repeated assertions of the young lady of her innocence and virgin purity.

About three weeks from the date of this remarkable birth, I was called to see the child, the grandmother insisting there was 'something wrong about the genitals'. Examination revealed an enlarged, swollen, sensitive scrotum, containing on the right side a hard, roughened substance, evidently foreign. I decided upon operating for its removal at once, and in so doing, extracted from the scrotum a minnie ball, smashed and battered as if it had met in its flight some hard, unyielding substance.

To attempt to picture my astonishment would be impossible! What may seem already very plain to my readers, as they glance over this paper, was, to me, at the time, mysterious. It was only after several days and nights of sleepless reflection that a solution flashed before me, and ever since has appeared as clear as the noon-day sun!

What is it? The ball I took from the scrotum of the babe was the identical one which, on the 12th of May, shattered the tibia of my young friend, and in its mutilated condition, plunged through his testicle, carrying with it particles of

semen and spermatozoa into the abdomen of the young lady, then through her left ovary, and into the uterus, in this manner impregnating her! There can be no other solution of the phenomenon! These convictions I expressed to the family, and, at their solicitations, visited my young soldier friend, laying the case fully before him in its proper light. At first, most naturally, he appeared sceptical, but concluded to visit the young mother. Whether convinced or not, he soon married her, ere the little boy had attained his fourth month.

As a matter of additional interest, I may mention having received a letter during the past year, reporting a happy married state and three children, but neither resembling, to the same marked degree, as the first, – our hero – Paterfamilias.

Not even our trusty refence on the weird and wonderful in medicine – Gould and Pyle – can match or add to this bizarre and apparently unique story, which they precis on page 441, naming the surgeon-author as L.G. Capers, of Vicksburg, Missouri.

However, we can offer the following story of a birth precipitated by a cannonball, sometime around 1602. Our source is an un-referenced fragment in Wilson's *Wonderful Characters* (1820):

When Spinola beseiged Bergen-op-zoom, a woman near her time fetching water, was cut off in the waist by a cannon-ball, and her lower parts fell into the water; people ran immediately to her, and saw a child stir in it, which was drawn out, and carried to Don Cordua's tent, where it was carefully attended. Afterwards it was carried to Antwerp, and the Infanta Isabella caused it to be christened by the name of Albertus Ambrosus. [p.184.]

The Spinola mentioned was an Italian marquis (1569-1630), who fought for Spain, leading their army of occupation to Holland in 1602.

## ABIEZER COPPE

### Selected Writings

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## ENIGMA VARIATIONS: A Column by Nigel Watson

### BLASTED RUMOURS

In times of stress, and when news is scarce or unreliable, rumours are taken quite seriously. During wartime it is not surprising that all types of rumours circulate and are taken as fact.

When the First World War broke out on August 1st 1914, fear of the unknown gripped the populations of all the countries involved. In Germany a great wave of patriotism swept the nation. Fear of enemy agents grew to such an extent that in Leipzig a mob attacked a German artillery officer because he had a dark complexion and black hair. His appearance suggested to the crowd, who beat the man about the head with umbrellas and sticks, that he was a Russian in disguise. [1]

Such public indignation towards anyone who looked remotely like a Russian was fuelled by an order published in the same edition of the *Leipziger Volkseitung*, supplied by Von Laffert, the General in command of Leipzig. He asked people to look out for any foreigners, "especially Russians", who might be acting suspiciously.

In contrast, the Director of the Stuttgart police was more sceptical of the population's powers of discrimination. He noted that:

*The populace is going absolutely mad. The streets are crowded with old women of both sexes who have nothing else to do but disgrace themselves. Each sees in his neighbour a Russian or French spy, and imagines that it is his duty to thrash both him and the policeman who intervenes, till the blood flows; if not that, then at least to cause an enormous crowd to gather in giving the alleged spy over to the police. Clouds become hostile airmen, stars are mistaken for airships and the cross-bars of bicycles are thought to be bombs; bridges have been blown up, telegraph and telephone wires cut in the middle of Stuttgart; spies have been shot and water supplies poisoned! It is impossible to imagine what will happen when serious events really come. [2]*

An example of one of these stories came from Metz, on August 3rd. It was claimed that a French doctor, with two officers in disguise, were caught trying to put cholera bacilla into the water supply. [3] This was later found to be pure invention. [4] However, this did not prevent panics about infected water supplies from erupting elsewhere in Germany.

Spies riding in motor-cars also became quite a fashion. One report alleged that 80 French officers disguised as German officers attempted to drive towards the Rhine province in 12 cars. [5,6] The most influential story noted that:

*Several motor-cars with ladies in them, taking gold to Russia, are on their way across Germany. They must be stopped and a communication sent to the nearest military or police station. The occupants of the motor-cars carrying gold to Russia are said to have transferred the precious metal to cyclists dressed as bricklayers. [7]*

Soon the whole German population seemed to be on the lookout for French and Russian motor-cars loaded down with gold. The comedy of the situation soon turned to tragedy:

*In Leipzig a doctor and his chauffeur have been shot, while between Berlin and Koepenick a company of armed civilians on the lookout for Russian motor-cars tried to stop a car. The chauffeur was compelled to put the breaks on so suddenly that the motor dashed into a tree, with the result that the occupants - several persons connected with the army - were hurled onto the road and received dangerous injuries.*

*In Munich a chauffeur was shot dead by a sentinel because he did not stop soon enough. Even children are not spared in this degrading fear of spies.*

*Near Büren (Westphalia) the twelve-year-old daughter of town councillor Buddeburg in Bielefeld was returning with her mother from Marburg in a motor. Somebody must have telephoned that the car was suspect, for the Landwehr Society placed armed sentinels at various points in the road. They cried 'Halt!' to the chauffeur; just as the car was stopping, shots were fired, and the girl sank dead in the arms of her mother. [8]*

Almost in complete despair it was reported that:

*This fatal hunt for motor cars has claimed yet another victim. Recently an Austrian countess was shot while working for the Red Cross, and now a cavalry captain and his chauffeur have been killed by a forest-keeper on the lookout for a Russian automobile.*

*The General Staff*  *again and again*

*issued the most urgent demands that this unhappy hunt for foreign motorists - which has already caused the death of several good Germans - should cease. It is unadulterated madness to search for enemy motors in our land. Neither enemy officers, nor cars loaded with gold, are driving around in Germany. [9]*

These and other rumours are published in *What Germany Thinks* by Thomas F.A. Smith (Hutchinson, London, 1915) to show "the pillars of truth which support the Fatherland". The author's intention was mainly to validate a war against a nation that had little regard for truth or the British Empire.

On reflection, the gold-carrying motor-car rumour appears very unlikely. But it did offer the chance for any person in Germany to fight the enemy in a concrete manner. He or she could dream of capturing gold and becoming a hero, just by waiting on the roadside. The reports that ladies rode in the car and passed their treasure to bricklayers on bicycles indicated that no-one could be trusted: male or female, working class or middle class.

It is very unlikely that the German authorities encouraged the spread of rumours like these, but, as we have seen, such manipulation of the press can be counterproductive.

Today, social pressures are not so intense, yet rumours that are just as silly can spread in the right circumstances. UFO reports are obvious examples. The power of rumours should not be underestimated, and if you believe aliens are amongst us, then you could argue that they are the true masters of this force. Certainly we tend to believe what we want to believe and ignore everything else. Perhaps that's why I don't think the aliens are 'Messengers of Deception' but rather that we ourselves are.

#### REFERENCES (all 1914)

- 1 - *Leipziger Volkszeitung* (3 Aug.) ■ 2 - *Leipziger Neuesten Nachrichten* (9 Aug.) ■ 3 - *Deutsche Tageszeitung* (3 Aug.) ■ 4 - *Berliner Tageblatt* (4 Aug.) ■ 5 - *ibid* (3 Aug.) ■ 6 - *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, (3 Aug.) ■ 7 - *Das Kleine Journal*, Berlin (5 Aug.) ■ 8 - *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, Supplement 1 (7 Aug.) ■ 9 - *Leipziger Volkszeitung* (15 Aug.)

## RESURRECTIONS: A Column by Michael T. Shoemaker

### ISAAC MARTIN'S DISAPPEARANCE

The "mysterious disappearance" of Isaac Martin has remained unexamined ever since 1931, when Charles Fort popularised the case in *Lo!* [Books p687.] The story, as Fort summarised it from the *New York Sun* (April 25, 1885) is that "Martin, a young farmer, living near Salem, Virginia, had gone into a field, to work, and that he had disappeared."

Fort's ambiguous summary suggests the idea that Martin may have dematerialised in front of witnesses. Fort himself suggested - half-jokingly - that Martin may have fallen victim to "a suction". Consequently, numerous writers have seized upon the incident as a possible example of teleportation, or of a man stepping into another dimension. It seems no one bothered to hunt for additional sources, even though Fort mentioned the intriguing claim that "other mysterious disappearances" had occurred in the Salem area at the same time.

The neglect of the Martin disappearance may have resulted from the fact that six similar cases have been exposed as hoaxes in recent years. These stories divide into two groups, both

linked to Ambrose Bierce horror stories (which may in turn have been based on contemporary tall tales). The stories about Charles Ashmore, Charlotte Ashton, Oliver Lerch (or Larch), Oliver Thomas and James Settles all appear to be derived from Bierce's *Charles Ashmore's Trail*. (See Joe Nickell's "The Oliver Lerch Disappearance: A Postmortem", March 1980 *Fate*.) The story of David Lang's disappearance, while crossing a field in view of witnesses, was apparently based either on a tall tale, or on Bierce's *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field*. (See *Fortean Corrigenda: The Disappearance of David Lang* in *FT*18, p6, Oct 1976, and Robert Schadowald's "David Lang Vanishes... Forever", December 1977 *Fate*.) [Editor's note: see also *Among the Missing* by Jay Robert Nash (Simon and Schuster, 1978), where it is postulated that the tale was an adaptation of the genuine disappearance of one Orion Williamson in Selma, Alabama, in July 1854.]

Because of the similarities between the Lang story and the Martin case, debunkers seem to have assumed that the latter is merely a fic-

tional variation of the former. *The Mysteries of the Unexplained* (Reader's Digest 1982), for example, strongly implies this explanation. But this is probably wrong. New evidence indicates that Isaac Martin *did* disappear, and that his disappearance was not especially mysterious.

The *Richmond (Va) Dispatch*, being a source close to the scene of the incident, provides additional details and a proper context for evaluating the case. On April 25, 1885, it published a telegraphic dispatch from Lynchburg, which said that Martin "left his home" on the 22nd "and went into the fields to work, and nothing has been heard of him since." This clearly shows that there were no witnesses to Martin's disappearance. He simply became a missing person. However, the dispatch also added the following bizarre element to the story:

*This is the second case of mysterious disappearance in that immediate neighborhood in the last two weeks. The list of such disappearances in the western portion of the state in the past few months is remarkable, quite a number having occurred during that time, and no clue has ever been discovered to any of them.*

That sounds like a *real* mystery – a genuine, terrestrial version of the phony Bermuda Triangle – but further research reveals a satisfactory explanation. Although the Lynchburg correspondent was not a hoaxer, he did sensationalise the facts. The earlier disappearance from Salem had been reported in the *Richmond Dispatch* on April 9. A Captain Jack Custer, acting as a mail agent and carrying \$1,400 for disabled Federal soldiers, had disappeared after leaving Salem on March 10. There is little mystery in this incident, because even "his friends think he was murdered for his money". Nevertheless, the paper noted that other "well-known citizens" had recently disappeared "in the western portion of this State". One such person was W.H.Crawford, Clerk of the Courts in Bland Co., who had disappeared from Wytheville on December 4. But once again the case is not necessarily mysterious. Crawford was aged 34, unmarried, and indebted to the Auditor's office, so he probably skipped town.

It is true, however, that huge numbers of people were emigrating – not disappearing – from southwestern Virginia. *The Independence Gazette* (Grayson Co.) reported this in a story reprinted in the *Dispatch* on March 15, and two Lynchburg reports on the subject appeared on the 24th and 18th March. The "exodus fever" had begun in Grayson Co., but had soon spread to other counties. There were several reasons for the exodus: a terrible drought the previous year had destroyed the crops, the winter had

been most severe, and the region was in an economic depression. In view of these facts, there can be little doubt that Isaac Martin abandoned his farm and joined the westward exodus.

Lovers of mystery may take solace, however, in a few odd coincidences from about the same time in 1885. Thomas C. Fletcher, ex-Governor of Missouri and a prosperous family man, disappeared from a St. Louis railway station on March 21. Weeks later he still had not been found. Also in late March, a series of "mysterious robberies" (i.e. objects were disappearing) occurred in Rockingham Co., Va. One farmer was robbed seven times, but "no clue" could be found, which suggests the possibility of poltergeist activity. And lastly, an element of hysteria may have been involved in the "exodus fever", because an extraordinary series of religious–revival meetings occurred in southwestern Virginia at the same time as the exodus.

## ANOTHER MAD GASSER?

Assaults by "mad gassers" – phantom-like figures who allegedly incapacitate people with a sickening gas – may be more common than we believe. Shortly after writing an article on the subject ("The Mad Gasser of Boteport", June 1985 *Fate*), I coincidentally discovered an unrelated gasser attack that had occurred in my own city!

The *Alexandria (Va) Gazette* reported the incident on November 16, 1903. At 2.00 am the day before, an elderly woman named Adaline Allen had aroused her Royal Street neighbours with cries for help. Her neighbours found her apparently unharmed, but she claimed that she had been "awakened by some person who had entered her room and attempted to chloroform her." The only other detail reported was that "nothing was missing from the house". No official comments were published, and the newspaper coyly concluded: "The object of the intruder has caused some speculation."

The lack of details casts doubt on the existence of a human intruder. If the attack was only a nightmare, it bears an uncanny resemblance to the pattern of the Mattoon gasser, who frequently attacked sleeping women in the morning.

The case also has an eerie aspect pertaining to the woman's surname. In *Mysterious America*, Loren Coleman noted that the surname Allen is one that seems to recur surprisingly often in connection with weird events. This help helps to confirm his insight, although the meaning of the connection remains a profound mystery.

### A Fortean Film Sampler

As one who makes and studies films, I am often asked what films and videos I would suggest that would be of interest to forteans.

Cinema has dealt extensively with many aspects of *fortean* and many videos are readily available that depict *fortean*, especially in the genres of science-fiction, fantasy, and horror. While there are hundreds, if not thousands of films that deal with *fortean* subjects and contain *fortean* motifs, very few of these films reflect a *fortean* philosophy on the part of their creators. When a film about *fortean* is directed by a director with *fortean* sensibilities or tendencies, the result may be a work that can truly be labeled *fortean*.

I am not recommending these as entertainment (although I found them all quite successful on that level as well), but rather as important *fortean* works in the motion picture medium. None of these films are simple films to deal with intellectually—they tend to be enigmatic and supply no easy answers or pat endings.

Here, then, is an annotated short list of films of possible interest to forteans and which best express a *fortean* worldview by their creators.

- *2001* (1968)—Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke's ambiguous cinema poem on the theme of extraterrestrial intervention in man's evolution. *2001* is arguably the major cinematic *fortean* work of the last 25 years—uncompromising in its unwillingness to explain the inexplicable. I can't help but think that Fort, who went to films often with his wife Anna, would have loved this film as it is a clear expression of the *fortean* notion of an organismic universe.

- *The Birds* (1963)—Inspired by the short story by Daphne du Maurier, Hitchcock makes no attempt to explain the bird attacks, nor is the threat ended at the film's conclusion. Moments of extreme disquieting strangeness of the sort discussed in surrealist criticism abound. One of my favorite scenes is that in which the rationalistic bird expert pontificates about the impossibility of the threat of bird attacks and is proven wrong within minutes of her anti-*fortean* tirade.

- *The Last Wave* (1977)—Australian director Peter Weir's classic film is ostensibly a film about a lawyer defending a group of aborigines charged with murder. At times, though, it feels like sections of Fort's *Book of the Damned* realized cinematically—there is an ice fall, black rain, aborig-

inal magic, weird interconnections, prophetic dreams, apocalypse—a smorgasbord of strangeness that is certainly one of the most unabashedly *fortean* films ever made.

- *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1978)—Also from director Peter Weir, this haunting feature concerns a mysterious disappearance of some schoolgirls on an outing to an aboriginal sacred spot. *Picnic at Hanging Rock* is fascinating as a perception of the psychological and sociological effects of a high strangeness experience. This film can only be described as strange and fits firmly into a new cinematic genre of strangeness as opposed to horror, fantasy or science-fiction.

- *The Shout* (1979)—The possibility for the existence of magic is realized in this chilling and enigmatic film by director Jerzy Skolimowski. Alan Bates plays a modern shaman with an ancient power to kill by shouting and John Hurt portrays a basic rationalist-type forced to confront events that he considers to be impossible.

- *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976)—Nicholas Roeg's science-fiction film, based on Walter Tevis's novel by the same name. Roeg reverses the convention of aliens menacing the earth and presents a case of Earth being a menace to aliens, probably the more realistic of the two possibilities. This premise was also a prominent part of *The Day The Earth Stood Still* but Roeg adds a real edge as he displays a vision of Earth through the eyes of an Alien (played by David Bowie in a perfect role for him) who is different, but not too different, from ourselves. Roeg was also responsible for the eerie psychic thriller *Don't Look Now* (1973) and is clearly a director with *fortean* sensibilities and someone to watch for further projects in this genre.

Other films of interest to forteans that I suggest seeing include *The Lost World*, *King Kong*, *Koyaanisqatsi*, *The Haunting*, *Quatermass and the Pit*, *The Elephant Man*, *Nomads* (an anthropological *fortean* horror film), *The Ten Commandments* (more signs and wonders per reel than just about any other film), and *Curse of the Demon*. Let me know of your recommendations of *fortean* films and perhaps we will create a listing that could be a basis for a *fortean* film/video collection.

# CHEATING THE GRIM REAPER

by PAUL SIEVEKING

**I**n FT47, I surveyed recent super-centenarian claimants, people who had managed to put off death far longer than the rest of us; but death itself is not always final. Recognising it can be a tricky business; various states of coma, epilepsy, hypothermia, or trance can mimic death pretty accurately. Bob Rickard has surveyed recent revivals of hypothermia victims [FT45, p28]. Dr Peron-Autret has estimated that as many as 200 American coronary victims are buried alive annually [See review of his book in FT39, p61], while Professor H-J. Mallach of Tübingen maintains that, every year,

about 20 people in West Germany suffer a similar fate. Poe's fear of premature burial was not merely a product of his morbid imagination! What follows is a fairly random selection of cases where the 'victims' survive that awful fate – prefixed by some survivors of the hempen necklace, including two women, both, it seems, wrongly accused of infanticide. Elsewhere in this issue, Bob looks at recent literature on the near-death experience. [See page 68]

◆ The power of suspended animation has long been claimed by yogis. There is the famous story of one called Haridas who demonstrated this talent before the Maharajah Runjeet Singh in Lahore in the summer of 1837. He fell into a trance, assistants stopped up his orifices with wax, wrapped him in a winding cloth and buried him deep in the earth. A guard was placed above the spot, and he was not dug up for 40 days. He was slightly emaciated, but otherwise in fine fettle.

## SURVIVING THE NOOSE

### ANNE GREEN

Ann Green was tried at Oxford, before Sergeant Umpton Croke, for the murder of her illegitimate child, and was sentenced to be hanged. The sentence was executed on 14 December 1650, in the Castle Yard, Oxford, "where she hung for about half an hour, being pulled by the legs, and struck on the breast by divers of her friends; and, after all, had several strokes given her on the stomach with the butt-end of a musket. Being cut down she was put into a coffin, and carried to a house to be dissected; where, when they opened the coffin, notwithstanding the rope remained closely drawn around her neck, they perceived her breast rise; whereupon one Mason, a taylor, intending an act of humanity, stamped on her breast and belly; and one Oran, a soldier, struck her with the butt-end of his musket. After all this, when Sir William Petty, Dr Willis, and Mr Clarke, came to prepare the body for dissection, they perceived some small rattling in her throat,



### THE MAN WHO COULDN'T BE HANGED

JOSEPH SAMUELS, SENTENCED  
TO DEATH FOR BURGLARY IN  
HOBART TOWN, AUSTRALIA,  
WAS GRANTED A REPRIEVE  
BY THE GOVERNOR AFTER  
THE ROPE BROKE 3 TIMES  
(1803)

An item from Ripley's *Believe it or not*. [We believe Hobart is in Tasmania.]

and began to use means for her recovery; in which they were so successful, that, within fourteen hours she began to speak, and the next day talked and prayed very heartily." [1]

Ann Green was pardoned, married, bore three children, and lived in good repute in Steeple Barton, where she died in 1659. After her miraculous escape from the gallows, she was found to be innocent of infanticide; the child had been stillborn at four months.

## MARGARET DIXON

The story of this woman is remarkably similar to that of Anne Green. She was from Musselburgh near Edinburgh, and had borne her husband, a poor fisherman, several children before he was pressed into the navy. She had an affair with another man from the village, got pregnant, and was accused of infanticide. She was thrown into Edinburgh gaol. When she came to trial in November 1728, the most damning evidence was the body of a child found near her place of residence, although she pleaded innocence and had probably miscarried.

"After execution her body was cut down and delivered to her friends, who put it in a coffin, and sent it in a cart to be buried in her native place; but the weather being sultry, the persons who had the body in their care stopped to drink at a village called Pepper-Mill, about two miles from Edinburgh. While they were refreshing themselves, one of them perceived the lid of the coffin move, and uncovering it, the woman immediately sat up, and most of the spectators ran off, with every sign of trepidation." [2]

Someone in the pub bled her, and she was put to bed. The next morning she was well enough to walk home. By Scottish law, not only was she released by the execution from the consequences of the offence of which she had been found guilty, but from the bonds of matrimony also; so her husband, who had returned from sea, publicly remarried her a few days later. A suit was subsequently brought by the Lord Advocate against the sheriff for omitting to perform his office; but no neglect could be proved, and it seems that Margaret Dixon's escape was due to some peculiar formation in her neck [3] See the item on Judith of Balsham [box, opposite] Mrs Dixon was still alive in 1753, and still pleading her innocence.

## HALF-HANGED SMITH

John Smith from Malton in Yorkshire had seen naval action at the expedition against Vigo in 1702 when the Spanish and French fleets were defeated by Rooke. On his return he enlisted in the Guards, but deserted and took to burglary.

JUDITH de Balsham, a Woman living in the Reign of Henry III; who being convicted of harbouring and concealing Thieves, was condemn'd, and hang'd from nine a Clock on Monday Morning, till Sun-rising on Tuesday, and yet escap'd with Life, as appears by a Pardon, which I shall transcribe verbatim.

*Ex Rotulo Paten. de Anno Regni Regis Henrici tertii 48<sup>o</sup>. Membr. 5<sup>o</sup>. 1264 AD.*

*Rex omnibus, &c. Salutem. Quia Inetta de Balsham pro Receptamento Latronum ei imposito nuper per considerationem Curie nostrae suspendio adjudicata, & ab hora nona dici Lunae usque post ortum Solis Diei Martis sequent' suspensa viva evasit, sicut ex Testimonio Fide dignorum accepimus: Nos divina Charitatis intuitu, pardonavimus eidem Inettæ festam Pacis nostrae, quæ ad nos pertinet pro Receptamento prædicto, & firmam Pacem nostram ei inde concedimus. In ejus, &c. Teste Rege apud Cantuar. XVI<sup>o</sup>. Diei Augusti.*

*Convenit cum Recordo,  
Laur. Halsted Deput.  
Algern. May Mil.*

The Extraordinariness of this Case is suppos'd to have happen'd upon the Account that the Larynx or upper part of her Wind-Pipe was turn'd to Bone, and made so strong, that the weight of her Body could not compress it, as Fallopius observes he has sometimes found. \* *Plot's natural History of Staffordshire. Fallopii Oper. Tim. i. Observ. Anatom. Traët. 6.*

From Jeremy Collier: *A Supplement to the Great Historical, Genealogical and Poetical Dictionary.* 2nd ed. 1727.

In 1705 he was caught, found guilty, and hanged at Tyburn on Christmas Eve. After 15 minutes a reprieve arrived, he was cut down, taken into a neighbouring house and restored to life by bleeding "and other proper applications".

He said that when he was turned off, he suffered greatly from the dragging weight of his body, and that his spirits were in strange commotion violently pressing upwards. When they reached his head, he saw a blazing light which seemed to go out at his eyes in a flash, and then he lost all sense of pain. When his blood began to flow again, he was in such agony that he wished those hanged who had cut him down. From this time he was called *Half-Hanged Smith*.

He returned to burglary, was taken again, tried at the Old Bailey, and acquitted. After further housebreakings he was a third time indicted, but the prosecutor dying the day before the trial, he once more cheated the gallows. What became of him afterwards is unknown. [2]

## WILLIAM DUELL

This scoundrel was convicted, with several others, of raping and murdering Sarah Griffin in a barn at Acton, near London, and was hanged at



Tyburn on 24 November 1740. After hanging the customary time, he was cut down and conveyed to Surgeon's-hall, in order to be dissected. He was stripped and laid on a board, and an attendant began to wash the body, during which definite signs of life were observed. A surgeon took several ounces of blood from him, and in a couple of hours he was able to sit in a chair, though speechless and apparently in great agony. He was kept there until midnight, and then taken to Newgate, where the next day he had a hearty appetite. Great crowds came to see and question him. His sentence was transmuted to transportation for life. [1, 2]

#### PATRICK REDMOND

was hanged on 24 February 1767 for street robbery. After 28 minutes, the mob rescued the body and carried it to an appointed place, where a surgeon performed a bronchotomy, an incision in the windpipe, and in less than six hours the mugger was brought back to life. A collection was made for him, along with moves to obtain a pardon; for English law said that the condemned shall hang until he is dead. Consequently, those like Redmond who recovered were liable to be strung up again. [2]

#### GEORGE FOSTER

was executed at the Old Bailey on 18 January 1803 for the wilful drowning of his wife and child in the Paddington Canal, London. After he had hung the usual time, he was cut down and taken to a nearby house, where Professor Aldini subjected the body to the Galvanic process, under the inspection of various medical gentlemen. Foster's jaw quivered, the adjoining muscles were horribly contorted, and one eye opened. With further treatment, the right hand was raised and clenched, and the legs and thighs moved. This was, of course, only the semblance of resurrection; Foster was irreversibly dead. Mr Pass, the beadle of the Surgeons' Company, was so alarmed that on his going home he died of fright! [2] See the lightning revival of Boris Stular (below).

#### JOHN BIRCKHEAD

Police peered into the cell an hour after John Birkhead, 41, was arrested during a drunken brawl in a Cincinnati bar in 1985, and found him dead, hanging by his T-shirt. As relatives arrived at the funeral home in Carthage, Ohio, they heard "a short sigh" from the coffin, and then another. Said a hospital spokesman: "Our doctors certified him brain-dead but that's only the first stage. A second examination was not performed. It was a bit of a rush." Birkhead made a full recovery. [4]



#### ALL PACKED UP & READY TO GO

##### FRANCOIS DE CIVILLE,

according to his tombstone in Milan, was declared dead in 1562 and was buried. Six hours later, on the intuition of his brother, he was disinterred and revived. He lived 70 years longer, dying at the age of 105 from a cold contracted while "serenading the lady of his heart all night long".

##### ESSIE DUNBAR

In the summer of 1915, Dr D.K. Briggs of Blackville, South Carolina, answered a call to attend a 30-year-old black woman called Essie Dunbar, who had suffered an attack of epilepsy. He could find no signs of life and pronounced her dead. Her family placed her in a home-made wooden coffin and arranged the funeral for eleven the next morning, to give Essie's sister, who lived at Allendale, an opportunity to catch the train to Blackville which arrived shortly before eleven.

Three preachers each took a turn at the rostrum, and after the service the coffin was opened so that the assembled mourners could take one last look at 'poor Essie'. The sister from Allendale hadn't arrived. After some hesitation and a final prayer, the coffin was lowered into the six-foot hole. When there was a foot and a half of earth on top of the coffin, a mournful chant was heard from the bottom of the hill: "Gotta see po' Essie one more time! Gotta see po' Essie one more time!" It was the sister, clapping her hands together and chanting as she came.

The ministers agreed to dig up the coffin,

and when the screws were removed and the lid opened, Essie sat up and smiled a greeting to her sister. The three ministers fell backwards into the grave, the shortest receiving three broken ribs when the other two trampled him in an effort to climb out. The rest of the mourners, including Essie's sister, fled in horror. Essie, unaware of the situation, joined in the stampede. Horror turned to panic when they saw the 'ghost' chasing them. For many years, Essie was a 'haunted' woman, and none of her race would come near her. Compare the treatment of Kabilo Kiptoo, who recently 'resurrected' in Kenya (below). In her final years, Essie had lots of friends. She 'died' for the last time on 22 May 1962. [5]

### LUNG JUN

'died' on 7 April 1973, aged three, in southern Guizhou province, China. He had been hospitalised the previous day after complaining of a stomach ache. "His parents buried him on the side of a mountain" said Canton's *Yangcheng Evening News*. "At 6 pm on the same day, the boy's father, Lung Wenzhe, found the tomb had been opened and the corpse was missing."

Almost 13 years later, in 1986, Lung appeared at the door of his parent's home. A hermit farmer called Tang Qikong had heard cries on the mountain, and tracked them to the burial site. He dug the boy out, took him home, and nursed him to recovery. Why it took so long for the boy to be reunited with his parents is not explained. [6]

### GERRY ALLISON

When a tyre burst in 1977, the hearse carrying Allison to his funeral on the outskirts of Los Angeles overturned and crashed tail-first into the front window of a rival undertaker's parlour. The hearse doors burst open and flung the coffin through the window. Bystanders were astonished to see Allison, dressed in white burial robes, stepping out of the shattered glass. The crash had brought him out of a coma which doctors had mistaken for death. [7]

### CHARLES K. HERRELL

ON 21 May 1980, police in Martinsburg, West Virginia, found a former commercial pilot, Charles K. Herrell, 56, unconscious in his car. They took him to the county jail where coroner Walter Fix declared him dead. Just before he was placed in a cooler at the Brown Funeral Home, an attendant unzipped the plastic bag for a final check and found him breathing. He was rushed to hospital and revived with sugar water. He suffered from hypoglycemia, characterised

by black-outs when his blood sugar dropped too low. [8]

### KABILO KIPTOO

For seven hours, relatives of Kabilo Kiptoo, a woman from Kararia, 150 miles north of Nairobi, believed she was dead, according to the *Kenya News Agency* (26 June 1987). She was reputedly 130 years old. Her burial was arranged the same day. As her coffin was about to be lowered into the ground, she sat up, talking incoherently, and stepped out of her coffin. When they realised their mistake, villagers slaughtered a white lamb and scattered its intestines around the grave to prevent evil spirits haunting the district. People who come back to life signify good fortune for the tribe. [9]

For the case of another Kenyan who came back to life – on three occasions! – see *DEATH IS A BAD HABIT* [FT45, p8.] Also, see FT38, p19 for the tale of the Romanian woman who jumped out of her coffin and ran into the road, where she was run down and killed.

### NOT SO LUCKY

◆ A 91-year-old woman was certified dead from heart failure and buried in Gaenheim, southern Germany in January 1986. After the mourners had left, gravedigger Emil Graf was shovelling the earth back in when he heard a knocking as if someone was kicking the coffin lid. He fetched five people from the funeral firm, and for ten minutes they stood around while the sounds grew fainter and stopped. Then it was decided to fill in the grave. [10]

◆ Li Yuehua, who nailed her invalid father-in-law into a coffin and had him buried alive was executed in Inner Mongolia, according to the Chinese press on 27 June 1986. The old man woke up and knocked off the coffin lid. The woman, her husband and a sorcerer nailed it back on and buried the coffin, ignoring his shouts and pleas. [11]

### WAKING UP IN THE MORGUE

We could fill pages and pages with further cases of the 'dead' reviving, but I might be trying your patience. In brief, then, here are a few tales of revival after doctors had declared people dead:

◆ On 28 January 1962, Dr Jerome A. Streem, a 37-year-old dentist from Cleveland Heights, who suffered from multiple sclerosis, revived in a funeral home. [12]

◆ In 1969, Mrs Kim Nevitt was found on a beach at Southport, apparently dead from hypothermia following a drug overdose. Dr John Benstead had a knife poised to begin the post mortem in a nearby hut when he noticed a tear.

She was rushed to hospital and made a complete recovery. [13]

◆ On 20 June 1974, Edward W. Sanders, 33, was thrown from his motorcycle in Atlanta, Georgia. He came round as surgeons prepared to remove his kidneys. [14]

◆ In March 1978, Yuliya Vorobyeva spent two nights in a mortuary in Donetsk, Ukraine, before reviving. Later, she developed X-ray vision. See WILD TALENTS IN THE UKRAINE on page 8.

◆ On 17 March 1981, Mrs Jacqueline Bessier, 32, apparently dead from a drugs overdose, was taken by an undertaker from Chapel Street, Stroud, to Gloucester mortuary 10 miles away. An attendant found her breathing when he opened the coffin. [15]

◆ On 18 March 1983, Karla Wood, a cocktail waitress of 22, from Champaign, Illinois, was found in a death-like state from a drink and drugs overdose. Placed on a morgue table ready for autopsy, she was noticed swallowing. Condition later said to be 'satisfactory'. [16]

◆ In February 1984, doctors were preparing to remove organs from the body of Alan Supergan, 20, who had suffered massive brain damage in a car crash, when he coughed. On 9 February, he was still critical in hospital at Libertyville, Illinois. [17]

◆ On 15 September 1985, Mario Arena, a premature baby of 27 weeks in Cosenza, Italy, pronounced dead two days after birth, was found alive after a night in a hospital morgue. His father, Vincenzo, had spent the whole night with him, praying and crying, and eventually noticed his feet moving slightly. "There is no doubt that the baby was dead", said Dr Oreste Lombardi, chief of obstetrics at Annunziata Hospital. [18]

◆ On 8 December 1985, Kishan Buwaji Katore and his wife were found lying in a pool of blood in their house in what appeared to be a double murder. The wife's head had been severed and Katore's throat was slit. Both were pronounced dead. A few hours later, a frightened policeman heard knocking from inside the refrigerated hospital morgue in Ghogte, about 93 miles north of Bombay. He found the blood-stained Katore shivering inside. He recovered after emergency surgery. [19]

◆ In June 1986, Henry Lodge, 63, had a heart attack while fixing fuses. As he was about to be dissected by Dr Phillip Campbell in the Los Angeles mortuary, he opened his eyes and yelled for help. Lodge was back home at the time of the report, but Dr Campbell was on leave suffering from nervous exhaustion. [20]

◆ In August 1986, A woman suffering from hypothermia began to gasp in a mortuary at

Dunedin, New Zealand. She was rushed to emergency, but later died. The same temporary reprieve happened to a 19-year-old woman in Hong Kong in October. [21]

◆ On 7 November 1986, Christopher Smale, 27, was found collapsed in woods near Reigate, suffering from extreme hypothermia and a drugs overdose. His body temperature was 68 degrees; people are normally considered dead below 85 degrees. At New East Surrey Hospital, Redhill, he was certified dead, but was noticed breathing on his way to the morgue. He was given a cardiac test which failed to show a reading, and was again pronounced dead. Minutes later, a technician in the morgue heard a gurgling sound and realised he was still alive. Admitted to intensive care, he died 36 hours later. [22]

◆ In 1987, reported in June, Boris Stular, 58, had been apparently dead for three days when mourners viewed his open coffin in a Sarajevo, Yugoslavia, cemetery. 25 witnesses saw Stular gasp and moan for approximately two minutes after lightning struck the 'dead' man. "He struggled to breathe and it even sounded like he called to his dead wife before he died for good" said Rexhep Karoly. "I'll never forget seeing him sit up in that coffin", said Gordana Stular, the dead man's sister. "There was fear and desperation in his eyes. He clutched his hands to his throat and groaned and wheezed. I wanted to run but was too scared to move. It seemed like an eternity passed before Boris stopped breathing. Then he simply froze."

An ambulance was called, and Stular's body taken for autopsy. Dr Tomislav Santic found two separate and distinct causes of death. The first was pneumonia complications; and sometime later he suffered heart failure. University pathologist Zdravko Glavik said it was quite feasible that Stular had been revived by lightning, as heart patients are frequently brought round by electric jolts. What was hard to believe was that he revived for two minutes after his heart had stopped for three days; 30 to 40 seconds was all that Glavik would allow. [23]

◆ On the 9th August 1987, Munir Mahidun, 65, had been ill for a week with asthma at his house in Pontian, about 180 miles south of Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. His wife, his eight children and neighbours believed he was dead when his constant coughing stopped, along with his pulse, and his body became cold and motionless. About four hours later, when the last rites were being administered at the house before burial, he sat up and asked why everyone was crying. [24]

◆ On 28 September 1987, a baby named Jesus Almaraz, weighing 28 ounces, was put into a cardboard box and taken to La Raza Hospital in

Mexico City, where he was certified dead and taken for burial, he was found to be alive. [25] put in a morgue for 12 hours. As he was being

## NOTES

● 1 - James Caulfield: *Portraits, memoirs and characters of remarkable persons, from the revolution in 1688 to the reign of George II*, etc. 4 vols. (1819). ● 2 - Andrew Knapp and William Baldwin: *The new Newgate calendar... during the eighteenth century, brought down to the present time*. 5 vols. (1826?). ● 3 - Camden Pelham (pseud.): *The chronicles of crime, or the new Newgate calendar*. 2 vols. (1886). ● 4 - *S.Express* 1 Dec 1985. ● 5 - Augusta (GA) *Chronicle* 25 Aug 1955 & 5 Dec 1985. ● 6 - *Saudi Gazette* 28 Mar; *S.Express* 27 April 1986. ● 7 - *Weekend* 14-20 Sept 1977. ● 8 - *Middlesex News* 23 May; *New Straits Times* 24 May 1980. ● 9 - (UPI) *London Standard* 26 June; *Houston (TX) Chronicle* 27 June; *Bild* (Germany), *D.Mirror* 27 June; *The Record* (NJ) 28 June 1987. ● 10 - *D.Record* (UK) 14 Jan 1986. ● 11 - *D.Telegraph* 28 June 1986. ● 12 - *St Louis Post-Dispatch* 29 Jan 1962. ● 13 - *D.Telegraph* 16 Jan 1987. ● 14 - *Omaha World Herald* 21 June 1974. ● 15 - *D.Express* 18 Mar 1981. ● 16 - (AP) *St Louis Globe Democrat* 18 April; *D.Express* 19 April 1983. ● 17 - *D.Record* 10 Feb 1984. ● 18 - Boston (MA) *Herald*, *Wolverhampton Express & Star* 17 Sept; *D.Express*, *Helsingin Sanomat* (Finland) 18 Sept; *Canberra Times* 19 Sept 1985. ● 19 - (AP) *Houston (TX) Chronicle*, *Duluth (MN) News-Tribune*, *Guardian*, *Sun* 12 Dec 1985. ● 20 - *S.Express* 8 June 1986. ● 21 - *D.Telegraph* 25 Aug; *Times* 2 Oct 1986. ● 22 - *D.Mail*, *Bristol Eve. Post* 12 Nov; *Scotsman* 13 Nov 1986; *D.Mail* 7 Feb; *Weekly World News* 24 Mar 1987. ● 23 - L.C.Moldavan's report in the *Weekly World News* 16 June 1987. ● 24 - *New Staits Times* 12 Aug; *Express & Star* 12 Aug; *Victoria Times-Colonist* 13 Aug; *Turkish Daily News* 15 Aug 1987. ● 25 - *D.Mirror* 29 Sept 1987.

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■ Does anyone know of a manufacturer of modern-type radio controlled models of UFOs which have some of the technical characteristics of UFOs described in ufological literature? Are there any models of avian [aerial? - Ed.] life which parallel UFO reports? Write: W. Roland Morewood, 24 Herbert Place, Dublin 2, Ireland.

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# WHAT 'LAKE MONSTER TRADITIONS' MEANS TO ME

by BOB RICKARD.

"... most of the stories our elders give us and call 'historical' are but dreams when all is done..."  
Hans Christian Andersen. 'The legend of Nürnberg Castle.'

**B**y now you must be aware that I am publishing forteen books [see the back-cover ad]. I want to write about one of them: not a review or critique – which I must leave to someone less closely involved – but about my own feelings as I transformed the rather unattractive 1982 Stanké edition of *Monstres des lacs du Québec* into the embodiment of my own vision of its potential.

Working with its principal author, French folklorist Michel Meurger, was truly an education. With each conversation or exchange of letters I was impressed by his grasp of his material, and the spread of his interests, which take in the latest forteen, UFO and other writings as well as Classical and modern anthropology. Meurger speaks English and a number of European languages – the better to get at European source material – and communicates well the clarity of his thought and the strength of his convictions. In his interpretation of Fort, I would say he was true to the Old Man's spirit.

It was clear from the start that a simple translation of the French-Canadian edition was not going to be enough. When Meurger checked the translation he wanted to make severe revisions to reflect the development of his own thinking in the intervening years. The most drastic changes were the replacement of the introduction with a substantial essay on Scandinavian traditions of lake and sea monsters. The final chapter was replaced by a recapitulation of the main themes and the detailed example of a monster-haunted lake in the homeland of dragons, Switzerland. To this we have added a great many new illustrations, a proper bibliography and index, and a major reorganization of the notes and references.

Inevitably the work will be categorized under the heading of 'cryptozoology', but it is much more than a book about lake monsters, even though Meurger disregards, by heroic single-mindedness, the myriad side-trails into other subjects as he relentlessly chases his

monsters across lakes, oceans, countries, cultures and centuries. Meurger's interest (which extends beyond this book) is in the cultural representation of Nature (the world of natural forces) and man's relationship with them. Meurger restricts his arguments to examples chosen from the single (but multi-faceted) topic of water monsters. Consequently, the book is a compact, powerful exposition of method and philosophy which has much of fundamental importance to say to forteans. It combines both iconoclasm and humanism in the same spirit as Fort. It is a book deep-dyed forteans have been waiting for for a long time.

Of course I'm biased, but I'm sure I would be saying this if *Lake monster traditions (LMT)* were published by someone else. My own forteanism was affected for the better in working on this project, and I want to make sure (and not simply for commercial reasons) that this becomes one of the seminal books of our field of study. I believe it reaches out beyond its chosen subject matter to comment in general upon the relationship between the world as it is conceived and as it is experienced. This Cartesian duality affects the interpretation of almost every type of phenomenon in the forteen view of things, and determines the forms of hypothesizing, including popular or media explanations.

## TROUBLE IN PARADISE

**M**eurger makes a direct assault upon the cozy world of modern cryptozoology that will not endear him to those who cannot see beyond the limits of cryptozoology. They lack the critical apparatus for identifying the folkloristic or mythological elements of a historical description, and the ideological perspective to place these imaginative elements (or motifs) into a cultural perspective. Meurger chooses the example of a sea-serpent sighting by a Norwegian sea-captain, Lorenz von Ferry, in

1746, which is regarded with some credibility in the orthodox transmission from Bishop Pontoppidan to Heuvelmans (via Oudemans) because von Ferry made a deposition to the court at Bergen. In dissecting the account, and others like it, Meurger shows that many of its apparently factual features (or motifs, as the folklorists call them) have antecedents in a strong folk tradition, being formal elements of traditional descriptions of water-monsters. These elements or motifs may be quite ancient, or relatively recent absorptions from another, but equally energized, field of popular culture; they are often context-sensitive, relating to a specific culture at a certain period. To disregard that fact is to risk being led into error.

Meurger accuses modern cryptozoology of interpreting the past literally and in the light of present zoological knowledge. This is equivalent to the errors of von Däniken and his ilk in seeking out the evidence of supposed god-like aliens in antiquity by interpreting it in terms of 20th century space technology (eg. his suggestion that the legend of Ali Baba's cave may have been a garbled record of a visit to some secret alien supplies depot!)

In this sense Meurger is not attempting a theory of nature through which to interpret the past, which is the goal of all kinds of biologists (including cryptozoologists); rather, he addresses a different area: the question of how we see nature. The monsters of the past were heavily invested with contemporary images of natural forces whether they originated in known, misperceived or genuinely unfamiliar animals, and the reporting of such encounters was through the language of the day, with its own specific vocabulary of expressions for anomalous experiences.

We can observe this process when we examine descriptions of the same animal by different cultures or at different periods. Meurger's prime example is the iconography of the walrus, for in pictures we have a peculiarly tangible representation of what people *thought* they saw. In the beginning, as rumour and traveller's tales preceded more direct contact with the beast, it was a generalized conception incorporating parts of many other animals real and imagined. This protean gradually gave way to a more naturalistic monster, conceived as a type of sea-serpent with walrus-like features. By the mid-17th century there were accurate naturalistic drawings of walruses in circulation alongside the fantastic creations [examples are given in *LMT*]. This divergence epitomizes two shaping forces at work, simultaneously, in the cultural normalization of anomalies: one pulls the creature in the direction of an ultimately

unknowable elemental, and the other towards a definitely knowable zoological animal.

When Heuvelmans advises his readers [see his *In the wake of the sea-serpent*, p143] that he will pass over the prolific legends of water-monsters among the American Indians because "unfortunately" they are "so fantastic", we can see that he is aware of the divide but does not know how to deal with it except by rejection. The accounts of the early colonists of the New World, and their descendents, he finds easier to deal with, undoubtedly because they are more amenable to reductive analysis. Meurger's book tries to restore the balance.

Today's cryptozoology seems too ready to accept past testimony about wonderous creatures – such as sea-serpents, dragons, mermaids, etc – at face value. In particular, argues Meurger, cryptozoologists seem easily impressed with testimony that has been made under oath, given in court, or otherwise endorsed by authority, and he gives several examples in which the trappings of legality could lead one to strange conclusions when the situation is judged by today's standards. For example, Meurger discusses the case of a hapless Swedish farmer who was condemned to death for illegal sex with a nature-spirit; and another who notarized a statement that his wife had been abducted by a troll to be used as a midwife. Cases such as these in the judicial arena buttressed the popular belief in succubi, nature spirits and fairy midwives etc – which, as most students of folklore know recur in many cultures – just as Heuvelmans has used, say, the legality of von Ferry's 1746 deposition to enhance its status as evidence of a sea-serpent.

Heuvelmans places his confidence in such evidence because it was solemnly sworn to, and because he finds it "hard to imagine a court of law risking making a fool of itself..." [p104.] In the first place the submission of evidence, however impressively legal, does not constitute proof. For example: the combined testimony of hundreds of thousands of people executed for alleged witchcraft, supported in courts with confessions and the full paraphernalia of the law of the day, do not provide any serious proof of the existence of organized covens of witches. Even if the stamp of judicial approval meant something, why should cryptozoologists accept sea-serpents, asks Meurger, and reject trolls and mermaids, records of which are more numerous in Scandinavian law than the rare appearances, in court, of the sea-serpent? Belief in such twilight creatures was widespread and the courts simply reflected the concerns of ordinary people.

Secondly, according to Meurger's reason-

ing, cryptozoologists select the elements of historical cases which seem 'zoological', and neglect the rest, especially the seemingly absurd or inexplicable. To continue with our example: it seems to have suited Heuvelmans' purpose to extract those naturalistic elements of von Ferry's account which supported his deduction that the vertically undulating creature was some kind of mammal. Yet von Ferry was equally insistent that his creature, which he calls a "snake", had a grey, horse-like head with a white mane - a conjunction of reptilian and equine features which Heuvelmans regards as "fantastic" [p102]. Perhaps it is fantastic after all, but not quite in the way Heuvelmans means (or rather implies, because he never pursues the matter). It is left to Meurger to point out that this same combination of features was known, and used to describe the 'water-horse' throughout Scandinavia and the Celtic world.

Meurger meets head-on the elements of absurdity in narratives of encounters with water monsters; on; and what he has to say illuminates other subjects, such as the close encounters of ufology. For example he discusses at length a sober sighting of a mermaid who held a fish aloft, motionless, for 2½ hours, and another of a veritable Neptune with coiffeured hair. Such surreality is a sure sign that these encounters might more properly belong to a state which includes the extremes of dreams and religious visions, than to the relatively modern tradition of precise observation.

As a word of caution, I must say that Meurger does not explain such cases in terms of an occult phenomenology (ie. phantoms, etc), nor as simple hallucinations. The perceived monster is, nevertheless, the product of our ability to fantasize creatively, individually or collectively, given the appropriate stimulus or trigger. (I will return to this below.) Our interpretation of reality, as we experience it, is influenced closely by our preconceptions and expectations of the moment.

## A WILD SWEDISH MONSTER HUNT

**E**xamples abound in current fortan events, but I'd like to put the spotlight on the wild goose chases in Swedish coastal waters, which seem to be an annual event of collective absurdity. They involve reports of mystery submarines which the navy can detect but are unable to catch or damage by nets or depth-charges. In other words these USOs (unidentified submarine objects) behave very like the mysterious UFOs that taunt and evade our most sophisticated radar. There are sometimes reports of invading 'frogmen' too, which

usually turn out to be based only on rumour. Such baffling behaviour rather scuttled the too-easy conclusion that these were secret Soviet subs violating Swedish territory.

In FT42 (p7f) we gave a very brief summary of the 1983 flap and its precursors, and drew attention to two possible analyses: the 'mystery sub' as a variant of the UFO, and as a suitably modern disguise for the ancient water monster. Meurger's book is sensibly sensitive to both interpretations, and as he points out, a literal interpretation by cryptozoologists or ufologists would miss the wealth of cultural meaning gained from perceiving the 'mystery sub' as but the latest manifestation of a living traditional expression which has long local roots.

Last June (1987), the Swedish Navy went on alert after 20 people reported seeing a 'periscope' in the Töre Bay, not far from Stockholm. Our Swedish correspondent Sven Rosén takes up the story: "In mid-July, one navy spokesman said that they had been chasing 'minor submarine objects' (which were not fish or seals), which seemed to appear in a number of places at the same time... Evidently the military are embarrassed because they don't know what they are chasing: subs, dwarf subs, or miniature dwarf subs!"

"A local newspaper, *Norrländska Socialdemokraten*, on 29 July, stated that a foreign frogman had been shot and wounded but that he 'dived back into the sea, bleeding'. The claim was immediately denied by the defence staff, although they now admit that some machine-guns had been fired during an incident. In many ways the hunt at Töre parallels the sub-chase at Karlskrona in 1984, in which a local newspaper reported that a dead black-clad frogman had been found and taken to the town's morgue. This too was denied by defence staff at the time. Both newspapers claimed they received their information from high-ranking officers involved in the hunts. *Norrländska Socialdemokraten* even claimed to have spoken to the officer who fired the bullets at the latest mystery frogman. In Karlskrona in 1984, however, the defence staff admitted that soldiers had been shooting at what they *believed* were 'foreign frogmen'. Heaven only knows what they were firing at! Evidently no bodies were found."

"At Töre, the local fishermen complain that the depth-charges, grenades and other explosives, dropped to flush out the mystery subs, have ruined their fishing grounds, said to be the world's best spawning ground for *Löja* (which could mean any one of three kinds of fish in English, and which is also slang for 'ridiculousness' or 'absurdity'. Exactly right in



this case.) The result of the Töre hunt was summed up by the newspaper *SDS* on 21 July: 138 blasts, but no blasted sub!"

Clearly the logical, literal nuts-and-bolts hypothesis of an invading sub could not adequately account for the paradoxical facts of the case, even allowing for the elaborations of rumour. At this point, Sven Rosén rightly widens the discussion. "In any century previous to the 20th, I have no doubt that the blame would have fallen upon *Näcken*, the 'water-man' of Scandinavian tradition (a 'frog-man'?), who could also appear as *Bäckahäst*, a water-horse, or in the guise of a drifting log or an upturned boat."

The water-horse is also a favourite form of the Celtic lake and sea monster, which is fully explored in Meurger's book, and its manifestations as a living-log or the keel of an upturned boat are used by Meurger to establish the continuity of the lake monster tradition throughout the northern hemisphere, as examples can be found at almost every lake with a monster tradition.

Sven continues: "As a water-horse, the *Näcken* was usually white; but as a water-man, the *Bäckahäst* was black, or entirely naked. (His clothing could, of course, vary. He was often dressed in clothes which were 'modern' for those days, so why shouldn't he be seen in a modern frogman's outfit today?)" The nakedness of this water spirit might itself provoke the immediate association with a diver's wet-suit, allowing the traditional perception of this mythic being to find an up-to-date expression, and thus live on in the local culture."

"The *Näcken* was one of the most widespread and popular beings in old Swedish folklore, and was traditionally regarded as a boundary guardian, so it seems natural," writes Sven, "for him to show himself at places wherethere has always been a boundary or border of some kind. The idea that modern submarine and frogman sightings could be a contemporary expression of traditional *Näcken* lore was first (?) brought up in the newspaper *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* a few years ago by folklorist Dr Jochum Stattin, who wrote his thesis on the *Näcken* as a boundary guardian." It comes as little surprise then to realise that Töre is close to the border with Finland, and that the concerns over invasion amount to a territorial anxiety.

If I may be permitted to indulge in extrapolation myself, I would suggest that this line of reasoning makes good sense of what would otherwise be dismissed as inconsequential absurdity or mere superstition. What plainer symbol can we have of the modern environmen-

tal tragedy than that the *genius locii* of these once fertile breeding waters, evicted from his element by pollution and depth-bombs, should be found dying on the shore – or that, when faced with his angry, reminding presence (interpreted as a threat), this ancient personification of natural order or equilibrium is shot at!

## THE EVOLUTION OF MONSTERS

**O**n a more profound level, the arrival of the sub and diver (or water-man) may be nothing less than a dramatized message from the psychic underworld drawing attention to the dangerous distancing of Western man from his own nature and from Nature itself. (This conclusion can also be drawn from the UFO and abduction enigma.) Which brings us back to Meurger's underlying concern with man's perception of the natural world and his role in it, and how this shows itself in culturally conditioned images – such as nature spirits, demonic elementals, monsters and other personifications of non-human natural forces with which archaic man has had to deal. In this context the *Näcken* is the guardian of that twilight frontier between the objective and the subjective, the conscious and the unconscious, the intellectual and the experiential, and the mundane and the magical.

The attributes of these entities are not arbitrary, but, as Meurger demonstrates, are transformed elements of earlier stages in the perception of the monster and its description in terms of the cultural images and preoccupations of the day. He gives several detailed examples in which the earliest form of the local monster was a vague, almost supernatural entity with protean characteristics, having a repertoire of ways in which it could manifest itself. In its intermediate period, the monster is perceived as a strange but naturalistic creature. In its modern stage the legendary creature is judged to be one which has not yet been discovered or scientifically described. This evolution, argues Meurger, corresponds closely to its cultural milieu, beginning with the archaic magical world view, through the awakening of the natural sciences in the Renaissance period, to the scientific-experimental mentality dominant today.

This development of the conception of the monster is critical to the book's main argument. To borrow one of Meurger's references from his introductory essay, W-E Peuckert, writing in the 1940s, observed this trend in the naturalization of dragons: they were once considered to be theriomorphic demons, but since the 16th

century were increasingly seen as cryptozoological beasts. It is this process in general – the cultural accommodation of natural and experiential anomalies – which is additionally demonstrated by changes in the descriptions of ‘UFOs’ through historical ages to the present.

Some ufologists, like some cryptozoologists, see their chosen field as a *fait accompli*, complete in itself and free of ‘outside’ influences. It is surely a complex belief system, like many others, in the process of evolving, probably in several directions at once. We have mentioned one of these already, and narrow-minded ufologists will find it very disturbing that their precious extraterrestrials can be traced by folklorists, through the murky waters haunted by USOs, to the water-monsters of rural folk and sailors. Another current takes us back through apparitional encounters with religious and occult entities to elemental entities such as fairies and spirits, as suggested by John Michell in his unsung *Flying saucer vision*, two years before Jacques Vallée popularized the Good People connection in his *Passport to Magonia* (1970). Yet another current integrates the UFO myth with the dangerous and mysterious world of shamanistic and paranormal events, as in Meurger’s account of the Québec loggers, terrified by the Amer-Indian myths of the ‘Flying Canoe’ piloted by demonic shamans; their anxiety became the nexus for mysterious disappearances, strange sights and sounds, poltergeist phenomena, and a fairy-world under a lake.

## THE MYTHOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE

In today’s society, dominated by materialism in many guises, there is a subtle pressure on everybody to opt for belief or disbelief. These two extremes determine most of the explanations and theorizing, and their consequences are often appalling in their narrow-mindedness. Meurger makes a plea for a middle path, a stepping back, as it were, for a fresh perspective. The case of the Rendlesham ‘UFO’ may serve as an example.

This complicated case – amply explored in Jenny Randles’ *Sky crash* (Neville Spearman, 1984) – centres upon allegations that USAF personnel investigating lights in this Suffolk forest in December 1980 encountered a luminous craft and its crew. Sceptics, however, argue that the lights were “nothing more than” misperceptions of a satellite, lights on a radio-mast, lights on a patrolling police car, and the beam of the Orford Ness lighthouse. Instead of choosing between the reductive-analytical and the experiential-creative explanations the

Fortean should recognize the spectrum between real-time events (which may well have their origin in mundane causes) and the anomalous in which the experiences take on the form and content of a close encounter. Proponents of either extreme use its opposite as the reason why they remain unconvinced. The UFO apologists cannot accept that the significance they invest in the case and its details could be reduced so drastically to a “nothing more than” solution, because their commitment is to a world-view in which there is, indeed, “something more”. The sceptics, on the other hand, cannot accept what they see as unnecessary complications beyond mundane, if misperceived, origins. They are separated by a chasm of ideological differences, not by the lack of data. Fort himself commented upon the difference between belief and factuality when he wrote: “It is not necessary that a gamekeeper should kill a luminous owl, and so put an end to a mystery. A story that he did will serve just as well.”

There is another, intermediate, viewpoint in which both extremes could be reconciled (partially, of course). This position is classically Fortean, but has developed spontaneously in ufology in recent years in response to the need to evaluate the absurd aspects of so-called ‘high strangeness’ cases. It is increasingly recognized that startling misperceptions can be triggered by the most ordinary phenomena under special circumstances: eg. a celebrated example is of the woman who mistook the moon for a UFO to the extent of seeing windows on it and its crew inside. Surely both versions of the moon can be regarded as ‘real’, each in their appropriate world-view? In my view this need not involve investing them with equal reality, because they are the products of two different ways of seeing. There may be many other ways of seeing – read Lawrence LeShan on this subject.

One governing factor seems to be the psychological state of the witness in which the most mundane perceptions can be misconstrued if they are unexpected or (wrongly?) judged odd at a critical moment: for example a sudden light which intrudes into a reverie during a monotonous motorway journey. The cover of *LMT* [also featuring on the cover of this issue] is intended to represent that spooky moment on a mist-shrouded lake in the wilderness when an unexpected swirl of the still water, or the looming of an old tree trunk, plunges the already dissociated witness into a fearful imagining. As Shakespeare mused: “How easy is a bush seen as a bear...”

The other factor, as these examples make clear, is the imagery added to the event by the

witnesses' mind. To me, at least, this suggests that we must also study (and never underestimate) the creative powers of the human imagination. This has also been one of the conclusions of Hilary Evans' grand collation of apparitional and visionary experiences - *Visions, apparitions, alien visitors* (1984), and *Gods, spirits, cosmic guardians* (1987), both by Aquarian Press. The old dismissal, that "It's all in the mind", may turn out to be substantially true after all. But it is obviously not the whole story, just as reductionism cannot account for the form and content of the subjective component of the experience, nor its psychic impact. (This is especially true of experiences which have altered the witness's life or personality, of which Saul's illumination on the road to Tarsus is a well-known example.) For these factors we have to turn to psychology in all its branches, and to the folklorists and cultural anthropologists who are to society as a whole what psychologists are to the individual.

Our understanding of an unusual experience, which may involve the subjective interpretation by the witness of both internal and external events, must take account of its physical, psychological and cultural context, all three of which - there may be others we have yet to identify - are in constant and intimate interaction in the body and mind of the witness and in his relationship with his culture. When the military investigators of the mysterious lights in Rendlesham forest entered those dark and isolated woods in a state of expectant anxiety, and in the culturally-informed suspicion that the weird lights might be UFOs, they crossed over to the mythological landscape (to use Meurger's phrase). In this hypnoid state, the creative power of the imagination, which is more associative than analytical, draws its raw material from both the internal and the external world and weaves them into a fantasy experienced as reality. [Did those involved at Rendlesham know of the 12th century tale of alien encounter at Orford? Although known as 'The Wild Man of Orford', the strange creature which resembled a man was found on the sea shore and was believed at the time to be a merman, and kept imprisoned until one day he escaped to the sea. The event was recorded by Ralph of Coggeshal in the 13th century. Abbot Ralph is also one of the main sources for the famous Suffolk visitation of little green people, known as 'The Green Chidren of Woolpit'.]

I am, frankly, not surprised that there are bitter arguments over the reality of witnesses' experiences. The impasse seems formidable until we abandon those extreme either/or positions. Most Fortean phenomena are ambiguous,

and I think it is significant that they are often dream-like events. Perhaps they are special forms of 'reality' which bridge the internal and external worlds, inner-space's equivalent of the 'worm-holes' or 'singularities' of interstellar astronomy in which paradoxical physical events are known to occur. Like Jung, I will draw back from attempting an explanation of how psychic images may be externalized or manifest in the everyday realm of physicality. This is another great mystery we have to address, but again, I think it significant that there are types of external phenomena (like stigmata, firewalking, levitation, rapid healing, some poltergeistery etc) directly related to an internal state of mind. Because of their paradoxical nature, I sometimes liken Fortean phenomena to the Taoists' 'Uncarved Block'. They are like fragments of a primal reality, pregnant with a myriad of possible manifestations, before they are whittled and polished into intelligible shape by the way we process our perceptions and expectations. If this sounds mystical, so be it.

Diehard sceptics - typified by the CSICOPs - will prefer the devil they know, coldly comforted by their inadequate reductions and "single vision". They reject all these phenomena and think, therefore, that there is no case for them at all. Why, I wonder, do they bother so much? What does it matter whether they trounce some spoonbender in the act of manhandling his cutlery or not? Their so-called 'exposé' does nothing to explain the will to believe, the forms belief takes, or the meaningful aspects of the most bizarre subjective experience. They make a weak appeal to Piaget's theory of 'magical thinking', and then they turn away from the inescapable fact that magical thinking is not confined to childhood, but is still an active principle in the adult world, in the world which is supposed to be governed by scientific laws and materialistic pragmatism.

Recall that Meurger found the evolution of monsters corresponded to the transition from the archaic-magical world to the magical-naturalistic and then to the scientifically naturalistic. We can propose another correspondence in the development of the individual: from the 'magical' thought of babyhood, through the confusion of adolescence, to the cynicism of adulthood. But we know from experience that this process is not inevitable; not all adults are cynical, analytical materialists. Archaic modes of thought are not eradicated, but merely suppressed; in the human they pass into the subconscious. I think it must be pretty much the same with whole cultures. The mythological landscape is closer to most people than the CSICOPs like to think,

precisely because its domain is internal rather than external.

## THE SCIENCE OF FOLKLORE OR THE FOLKLORE OF SCIENCE?

I used to assume, unquestioningly, that our Fortean work has a definite relationship to the evolution of science; that as science trundled onward more and more of our subjects would pass from our amateur study into the full glare of institutional research by professional scientists. While we Fortean lack the funds and facilities of the professionals (and *ipso facto* are condemned as amateurs) we are little more than caretakers of our chosen subjects.

The error here, of course, is in believing the so-called progress of science to be inexorable, that it will devour every subject indiscriminately in its ravenous appetite for knowledge until, in the far distant future, scientists would "know everything" including the mysteries of human perversity. Old age has put some perspective on this for me: understanding of Fortean phenomena does not come merely through data acquisition, nor does usefulness depend upon developing a technology based upon that knowledge.

One of the most difficult tasks facing Fortean is to articulate that sense of meaningfulness that we detect in the phenomena we study. I used to think that the leads, in methodology and philosophy, would come from the direction of science, but Meurger's book demonstrates to me conclusively that we might be better off looking to folklorists and cultural anthropologists for this guidance.

In Fortean studies, as in many other areas of amateur expertise, there is a subtle pressure for us to become more like the professionals if we wish ourselves to be 'taken seriously' by them. Like many, I have in the past assumed the only choice was to become more *scientific* in our methodology, reporting and allegiances. We cannot hope that science will become less dogmatic or even more inclusive, because dogmatism and specialization are the big guns of its authority. Nor can we hope that science will meet us half-way in the matter of evidence. Most of our subjects will still be regarded as heresy by many scientists long after they come within the pale of science, just as, say, psychology, is still regarded with suspicion by hard-line scientists, and probably for the same reason. Perhaps worst of all is that science seems to have little to say about the territory we want to explore, and precious little in the way of guidance about *how* to explore.

The folklorists and cultural an-

thropologists, to the contrary, have, for decades, been grappling with a phenomenology fairly similar in complexity to that displayed by Fortean subjects.

The central phenomena of almost any folk tradition may have characteristics which are seemingly of this world and others which are more ephemeral, dreamlike, mythical, paranormal or even 'supernatural'. To emphasise one aspect over the others, or to argue from an isolated position condemning the others, is an exercise in futility. In Fort's terms these are attempts to account for the universal by accepting only the local. Folklore accounts or narratives are judged to be the product of many forces: physical, social, political, economic, geographical, historical, cultural, psychological, mythical and religious (to name the most obvious), not the least among these being the sheer creativity of the human imagination.

This is something Fortean is only just beginning to realise about their subject matter, just as sensible ufologists have already done on their own patch. For example the social role of the Congo's *mokele mbembe* monster has been ignored by all the expeditions to Lake Tele so far, who have been fascinated by the idea of a flesh-and-blood survivor from prehistory. Only as an aside in conversation with Operation Congo member Mark Rothermel – see FT47 p24 – do we get a hint that the *mokele mbembe* might be something *more* than a mere monster, for the natives attribute magical powers to the monster which is blamed for all sorts of bad luck.

I am not suggesting that Fortean should now turn away from science and embrace cultural anthropology or comparative folklore, but that we learn from *both*. What I find exciting is that Meurger has given us another alternative to the dominant (science); one which permits a really functional dialectic. Fortean phenomena, for the most part, bridge the inner (psychic, mythic, acausal, subjective) and the outer (physical, everyday, causal, objective) worlds. We learn from the New Physics that the act of perceiving the 'external' world actually distorts it – now, studies like Meurger's show the same is going on with our perception of our cultural environment. Fortean could develop that middle ground. We need to bring meaningfulness and humanity to the collection and analysis of mere data, and on the other hand we must boldly explore the possibility of paranormal intervention in everyday physicality (eg: the physical traces of 'impossible' UFOs, thoughtography, controlled evolution, do statues weep real tears?, etc).

I look forward to an era of exciting bridge-building.



## CLOSE ENCOUNTERS WITH DEATH

**ADVENTURES IN IMMORTALITY: A look beyond the threshold of death** by George Gallup with William Proctor (*Souvenir Press, London; 1983, hb £7.95, pp226, index*) ■ **A CASE FOR REINCARNATION** by Christine Hartley (*Robert Hale, London; 1987, hb £8.95, pp159, index*) ■ **A COLLECTION OF NEAR-DEATH RESEARCH READINGS** edited by Craig R. Lundhal (*Nelson-Hall, Chicago; 1982, hb ?, pp240, refs*) ■ **DEATH AND CONSCIOUSNESS** by David H. Lund (*McFarland, Jefferson, NC; 1986, hb £18.95, pp194, notes, refs, index* - Dist. in UK by Bailey Bros & Swinfen, Folkestone) ■ **DEATH AND DYING: the Tibetan tradition** by Glen H. Mullin (*RKP/Arkana, London; 1986, pb £5.95, pp251, notes, index*) ■ **DEATH, INTERMEDIATE STATE AND REBIRTH IN TIBETAN BUDDHISM** by Lati Rinbochay & Jeffrey Hopkins (*Rider, London; 1979, pb £2.95, pp86, notes, index*) ■ **OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCES** by Janet Lee Mitchell (*Turnstone, Wellingborough, Northants; 1981, pb £5.95, pp128, notes, bib, index*) ■ **RECOLLECTIONS OF DEATH: a medical investigation** by Michael B. Sabom (*Harpur & Row, NY; 1982, hb ?, pp225, tables, refs, bib, index*) ■ **REINCARNATION: a new horizon in science, religion and society** by Sylvia Cranston & Carey Williams (*Julian Press, NY; 1984, hb \$16.95, pp385, notes, refs, index*) ■ **SURVIVAL AND DISEMBODIED EXISTENCE** by Terence Penelhum (*RKP/HP, London; 1980, pb £2.25, pp116, bib, index*) ■ **SURVIVAL? Body, mind and death in the light of psychic experience** by David Lorimer (*RKP, London; 1984, pb £5.95, pp342, notes, bib, index*) ■ **THROUGH THE GATES OF DEATH** by Dion Fortune (*Aquarian Press, Wellingborough, Northants; 1987, pb £5.99, pp144, index*).

Firstly, our apologies to the publishers for the lateness of these reviews. Secondly, this is not a complete, or even general, survey of the available literature, but a collection of books on related topics, found on our 'awaiting review' shelf.

Modern ufology has recently celebrated its 40th birthday with various retrospective books and articles, but nothing much has changed. It has more data, but is little wiser. While it may be fashionable to blame this lack of progress upon governmental conspiracies, or, from the sceptic's point of view, because the whole field is based upon hoaxes, misperceptions, delusions and wishful thinking, the truth of the matter is that there is very little ideological criticism in the field itself. Constant bickering between factions and the defensive posturing of proponents has strangled the development of many useful paradigms. The commitment to

search for all-or-nothing solutions is philosophically naive and doomed to failure. Such is the gut-feeling, however, that the questions and eventual answers to the enigma of UFOs and associated phenomena have something fundamental to say about human beings and the worlds they experience and live in that thankfully the field continues to attract the efforts of many bright individuals who strive to keep a perspective.

With some exceptions, ufologists have been slow to see the morphological similarity between the contact and abduction experiences on the one hand and the so-called near-death experiences (NDEs) on the other. Interest in NDEs has largely flowered in the USA following the books of Dr Raymond Moody (*Life after life 1976; Reflections on life after life 1977*), who popularised a list of stages in the NDE which he suggested were common to all of his cases: such feelings of peace, ineffability, a degree of autoscapy

(eg. looking down on the operating table from a point external to the body as doctors worked to save the viewer's life), travelling through a tunnel, awareness of some kind of environment, meeting others (usually deceased friends or relatives), meeting a 'being of light', a life review, and encountering some sort of barrier after which they are returned to their body. The correspondences between NDEs, initiated usually by coronaries, critical illnesses, or sudden accidents, and the theosophically-derived field known as 'Astral projection' had been explored more than a decade earlier by Dr Robert Crookall, to whom tribute must be made for his attempts to establish a common phenomenology similar to that proposed by Moody. Today, the term 'Astral projection' has given way to the out-of-body experience (OOBE) largely, one feels, in an attempt to make it acceptable for study in universities by scientific psychic researchers. Mitchell's is a very

good survey of OOB research; she also examines, briefly but intelligently, the cross-cultural, psychological and historical dimensions of the subject.

Some ufologists (eg. Hilary Evans, Darren Chanter, Mike Costello and Jenny Randles) have written of the common ground between abductions, NDEs and OOBs, but the comparison should not stop there, for the burgeoning NDE field provides the ideal model for comparison with ufology itself. Like ufology, the origins of NDE research can be found in occultism, mystical theology, folklore, mythology and fantasy (to name but a few), more within the pale of shamanism than within the accepted field of science. Today, as the works by Lundhal and Sabom demonstrate it is very much a field in which scientists can unashamedly keep a high profile; something they are still hesitant to do in ufology, except to be seen to be sceptical. Scientists, in this case doctors, have rushed to conduct extensive studies of the situation in which a coronary victim (usually) revives and tells a remarkable tale of being aware of what had happened to him (although clinically unconscious or even dead), of feelings of peaceful disembodied existence. In Lundhal's valuable anthology are a range of articles from doctors, surgeons, psychologists, sociologists and others turning-over most aspects of the subject, with statistical surveys, comparisons of NDEs reported all over the world, and a direct comparison with experiences of the actually dying as reported by doctors and nurses. Sabom's contribution is amplified by his own book: as a cardiologist who became interested in the experiences of his patients, he says, he has had to "rethink some of my own beliefs concerning the nature of man, the process of dying, and the practice of medicine."

Just as ufologists now accept that contacts, etc occur all over the world, NDE researchers also come up with convincing research to suggest the core experience is independent of sex, age, education and culture, and even religion. Religious elements enter into the experience in the form of subjective imagery corresponding to the person's expectations; thus the

'being of light' is interpreted as Jesus or Krishna only by the devout Christian or Hindu. By contrast with the majority of cases reporting positive experiences, very few have frightening trips, and fewer still report visiting 'Hell'.

There is little medical basis for explaining these experiences as hallucinations due to a toxicity in the brain's blood supply. Survivors seem not to suffer the debilitating depression that follows most major illnesses, but on the contrary revive from their near-death crisis enervated with the certainty that there is more to life. With the fear of death removed, they often report a complete renovation of their morality, especially increased compassion towards others. This compares with the dramatic changes in personality following UFO contacts or abductions, or even shamanic initiation.

As the data mounts in ufology to support the subjective nature of the 'UFO experience' (UFOE?), so the chasm grows wider between that and the ET hypothesis, and it becomes a greater leap of faith to postulate 'real' abducting aliens on the basis of some anomalous experiences of that sort. The equivalent situation in NDE research is to postulate the existence of 'real' landscapes somewhere (beyond time & space, or in another dimension, or in 'Heaven?') which they have actually visited; or even the continuation of personal identity after death.

Several views on this last subject are represented here. For example: Penelhum discusses it as a Christian philosopher interested in our conception of identity, while Dion Fortune's informed occultism expounds a mixture of theosophy, spiritism and popular science. Christine Hartley's book is an extremely personal one; her 'case' for reincarnation is that she 'reincarnates', or has experienced ('re-lived' in some vivid instances) subjective adventures which seem indistinguishable from memory. Is the continuity of identity in such cases illusory? Lund seems to think not in his wide-ranging philosophical analysis of this problem. Penelhum represents the old-style advocate, arguing for an afterlife on the basis of the philosophy of ideas, which always seems rather narrow and bland and therefore

unconvincing to me.

Lund and Lorrimer (covers pretty much the same ground but is less philosophical and more historical) have a more convincing strategy; to the main line of abstruse reasoning they add a number of key areas of circumstantial testimony (OOBs, NDEs, mediumship and the advocacy of souls by mystics, ESP and psi, and the corpus [if that's the right word] of apparition accounts). Lorrimer goes even further and correlates all that with what he calls 'post-mortem descriptions of death' being accounts of dying and whatever happens next delivered through mediums or other channels. These are not considered proof in themselves, but have some value, he argues, because they seem to corroborate the phenomenology of OOBs, NDEs, etc. If the same process or experience is being described, he speculates, "then the conscious self which can operate outside the body during physical life can operate independently of it after separation at bodily death."

Even if survival of bodily death were proved, it is another conceptual leap to propose that the disembodied ones can reincarnate. The subject has considerable appeal, and not just for religious reasons. Proponents say that it explains early genius, predisposition to illnesses or neuroses (which relate to past-life crises), close relationships with others, and social injustice, etc. Many of the world's greatest thinkers have accepted the logic of karmic-type causality operating through more than this one life; eg. from Fidele's Pythagoras anthology [also reviewed this issue] I learned that Pythagoras claimed to be fully conscious of his previous lives and likewise in each of those lives.

However, the subject is fraught with difficulty for intellectuals who lack the confirmation of direct experience. How, I wonder, can you distinguish a genuine but imperfect remembrance of past-life (as in the children studied by Stevenson) from, say, a telepathic transference of memories from the disembodied deceased? Or from the amazing creative fantasizing of what Hilary Evans calls our subconscious 'producer' based on unconscious memories (crypt-

amnesia) as happened in the famous case of Bridey Murphy. Although these questions are not answered in the study by Cranston and Williams, they do a good job of surveying the contemporary range of opinions, the implications of OOBs and NDEs, and the place of reincarnation in the theology of many religions and cultures. George Gallup's book is based upon the extensive survey of American beliefs in 1980-81 by the Gallup Poll (of which he is vice chairman), in which about 100 million people or about 67% declared their belief in life after death, and 23% in reincarnation. (The full results of the survey are included in the book).

Many of the works mentioned above refer to the Tibetan Buddhist teachings on life after death and reincarnation. Those interested in learning more should read both the Mullin, and the Rinbochay and Hopkins books. Where the Hindus recommend that the last third of a man's life be directed toward spiritual matters, the Tibetan's emphasise the fact that ordinary mortals can have no knowledge of their life span and therefore should live every hour as though it were their last. This practice, if carried out, naturally focuses the mind upon the good, noble, beautiful and compassionate things. The Rinbochay & Hopkins book, with a foreword by the Dalai Lama, has four main chapters - on dying, the intermediate state, the stages of incarnation, and the stopping of death - being the translation of an 18th century text. Mullin's book has the same message, but is a much easier read. He gives a number of texts on such subjects as the Bodhisatva teachings on death, death meditations, memories of past lives, knowing the signs of one's own death as a way to liberation, longevity yogas, consciousness transference, and meditations on impermanence. There are preambles which are far from morbid, and an astonishing story of how learned lamas can control or delay their own deaths until a propitious moment. Of all the books here, I think Mullin's taught me most about death and dying.

**Bob Rickard**

## **UFOs 1947-1987: The 40-year search for an explanation**

**Compiled by Hilary  
Evans & John Spencer  
for BUFORA.**

*Fortean Times, 1 Shoebury Rd, East Ham, London E6 2AQ; 1987, pb £12.50 / \$25., pp384, notes, refs, photos, illus, tables, diags, reading list, directory of organisations, biographies of authors. [Also available from publisher, £1.65 p&p extra.]*

It is difficult in the space of a short review to comment on 49 separate articles, so I will concentrate on general impressions.

Firstly: The vast gap between the majority of contributors, who accept the proposition that the 'UFO phenomenon', as commonly understood, is primarily a psychosocial phenomenon - generated internally or through misperceived or misinterpreted external stimuli, most of which originate in well-understood natural or man-made objects or events - and the minority who are committed to the 'extraterrestrial spaceships' hypothesis.

Secondly: The clear divergence among that majority between those who are primarily interested in the psycho-social cultural aspects, and those (not terribly well-represented here, perhaps) who wish to get behind the psychosocial mask and unearth the real causes (as they see it) in poorly understood meteorological or geophysical phenomena.

Thirdly: A divergence of opinion as to whether the psychosocial imagery is generated solely by human culture, or whether it is God (or some other super-human entity) speaking to us through dreams and visions.

Fourthly: The naivety and intellectual isolation of traditional ufology; especially in its supposition that the ETs are people of a not very different shape, and with a technology just ahead of ours (with anti-gravity 'flying saucer' propulsion theories far removed from the mainstream of contemporary physics), and accepting vague rumours of crashed 'saucers' which never deliver authentic-sounding technical details.

Fifthly: The defensive

character of traditional ufology, which has barricaded itself behind a 'Unified Catalogue', the purpose of which is primarily to keep as many cases out of the IFO file as possible.

As for individual contributions, I would especially recommend Bertrand Méheust's 'UFO abductions as religious folklore'. Méheust's themes, the "sacral promotion of medical fantasy", the "shocking" incomprehensible nature of revelation, and shamanic initiation, are central to the concerns of our subject area. (Just when are we going to get English translations of Méheust's books?) Other papers I would note are those by Clarke and Oldroyd, Keul and Phillips, Rutkowski, Moravec, McClure, Monnerie, Watson, Maugé, Stacy, Roberts, Chalker, Verga and Evans and Spencer (on abductees). No doubt others would have their own list.

I must conclude with a general comment on the presentation, which is (despite some transpositions and typos) an excellent first effort from Bob Rickard's Fortean Times.

**Peter Rogerson**

## **THE ENIGMA OF LOCH NESS: Making sense of a mystery**

**by Henry Bauer.**

*University of Illinois Press 1986, hb \$20.75, pp244, photos, drawings, appendices, bib, index.*

Henry Bauer is a professor of chemistry who has taken a serious interest in the interaction of science and pseudoscience, authoring a tome on the Velikovsky dispute. His interest in the secret of the loch goes back to the 1960s and membership of David James's Investigation Bureau, and he is well placed to write authoritatively on the quest at Loch Ness. He has concerned himself more with the witnesses and the investigators than with the monster.

Until now, the only book dealing with the human side of the mystery was Tim Dinsdale's chatty *Project Water Horse*. Bauer's heavily-footnoted work treats the whole subject much more seriously, and it is right to do so. Ufologists have long recognised



that the investigator and his prejudices are often as important as the cases which he investigates, and it is about time that cryptozoology followed suit. The rewards are fresh insights which help us to understand why a phenomenon for which there is so much evidence is so widely ridiculed or ignored.

Bauer is especially good, as one might expect, when explaining the attitude of Science to the monster. More than a third of the book is devoted to this topic, the author concluding that by its own lights the scientific community is justified in treating the whole subject with circumspection for the time being. He is less at home when dealing with the important topic of media coverage, and this section is less insightful but still worth reading. Also included are round-ups of 'bad reasons for believing', 'bad reasons for not believing', a summary of conventional monster wisdom, a brief treatment of the evidence, and a chronology.

The author offers some impressive reader services. Here, reproduced for the first time in the mainstream monster literature, are most of Frank Searle's (blatantly fraudulent) photos; here too is the best available bibliography of Loch Ness literature. Ulrich Magin's comprehensive list of all known Nessie sightings is printed as an appendix; his summary of 600-odd cases finally lays to rest the wild estimates of 3,000 or 10,000 reports bandied about elsewhere.

On the minus side, the book is sometimes poorly organised, and Bauer's own prejudices are evident in places. He shouldn't be criticised for this; at least he is an honest writer, and we all have our biases. But one or two of his passages are so peculiar as to be worthy of comment - a darting attack on Peter Costello's "most dangerous" book, listing 'errors' which are mostly just typos, for one. This is ill-mannered; Bauer's book has its own quota of mistakes, and the author is happy to quote Costello when it suits his purpose.

A forteen would also have to say that the author's determination to distance what he unscientifically calls 'Nessiedom' from anything which threatens to taint its scientific reputation may not be entirely constructive. Nor does Bauer's berating of FT and the

"fringe press" for bringing the LNM into disrepute gel with the admission that these publications have made available a mass of material - estimated at 25% of the total - which might otherwise have been lost.

A more serious criticism can be made of the book's price: \$20 for 157 pages of text, plus appendices. This, and the particular slant which Bauer has given the subject, could restrict sales to specialists. They will find it a valuable work.

Mike Dash

**THE UFO  
LITERATURE:  
A comprehensive  
annotated  
bibliography of works  
in English  
by Richard M.  
Rasmussen.**

McFarland & Co, Jefferson, NC; 1986, pp271, 2 indexes - distributed in UK by Bailey Bros & Swinfen, Folkestone, £29.95.

**UFOs AND THE  
EXTRATERRESTRIAL  
MOVEMENT:  
A bibliography**

by George M. Eberhart.

*Scarecrow Press, Metuchen, NJ, USA; 1987, 2 vols, pp1298+xxv - distributed in UK by Bailey Bros & Swinfen, Folkestone, £97.50.*

It seems hard to believe that in the relatively small world of ufology two such mighty works should be underway more or less alongside each other. At a casual glance one wonders why Rasmussen bothered, even though his bibliography is better than any on the subject before it, because Eberhart's two-volume set is simply enormous and lays a better claim to being 'comprehensive'.

To be fair, there are differences. Rasmussen's is annotated, and is preceded by two chapters which attempt to assess the variety of UFO literature and put it (inadequately, in my view) into a historical perspective. The annotations are useful, but there are glaring omissions to the main bibliography which must limit its usefulness: for example, there is

some attention to the pre-1947 influences on modern ufology, and despite the briefest recognition of Fort's legacy there is no mention of his writings at all. (For ufology's debt to Fort, see, for example, Paul Willis' 'The alien visitors of Charles Fort' in the first issue of *STRANGE*.)

Eberhart's bibliography, however, is in a different league. It is on the same heroic scale as his previous efforts in cryptozoology and general anomalies. It would be too trivial to say that it contains 15613 entries without tipping my hat (if I wore one) to the imagination and care with which he has planned his research and presentation, and the sheer doggedness and courage it must have taken to carry it out. His wife also must have earned his tribute to her as he put in the time behind mountains of books. There is another ingredient which anyone who has looked up Eberhart's references will readily acknowledge: his painstaking accuracy.

The first volume presents a detailed survey of the UFO literature, and, unlike Rasmussen, includes the popular press and scientific periodicals. The main sections are: general works, case studies, UFOs in sea and space, historical UFOs, UFOs and sociology, UFO investigations, foreign language monographs, UFO periodicals (these last two categories arranged by country), special materials (including comics, government documents, books for children, and proceedings of conferences), related phenomena - and in volume two: contactees, ancient contact, prehistoric cultures, Hollow Earth, science fiction, and extraterrestrial intelligence. These are fully cross-referenced with Name, Periodical and Organization indexes. To give you an idea of the detail; under the contactee heading you'll find sub-headings of: contactees before 1952, Adamski, contactees after 1952, contactee books from outside the movement, contactee periodicals, Marian apparitions, men in black, the Allende affair, and Mt Shasta and the Lemurians. All the sections have sub-headings, so that, seemingly, nothing is omitted. Mention of a few of these will add to an impression of the book's scope: UFOs on TV, UFOs and monsters, ancient as-

tronauts (skeptical works), public attitudes, crash/retrievals, animal reaction cases, marine luminescence, ghost lights, and UFO material in non-UFO books. Many of these subjects are further divided into the opposing groups of proponents and sceptics.

Eberhart, a professional librarian, includes a useful introduction to the scope and arrangements of subject matter, and other information for reference librarians and others unfamiliar with the material in its rich variety, including mini-introductions before each heading and sub-heading (some written by J. Gordon Melton). At a price not far short of £100 this book will be beyond the reach of many, but I sincerely hope libraries of all sorts add it to their shelves, thereby making this valuable work available to all.

Bob Rickard

## **SKY CRASH:**

**A cosmic conspiracy**  
by Brenda Butler, Dot  
Street & Jenny Randles.

Neville Spearman, Sudbury, Suffolk; 1984, hb £7.50, pp283, plates, photos, refs. - Grafton, London; 1986, pb £2.95, pp379.

## **A SECRET PROPERTY** by Ralph Noyes.

Quartet Books, London; 1985, hb £7.95, pp186.

## **ABOVE TOP SECRET: The worldwide UFO cover-up**

by Timothy Good.

Sidgwick & Jackson, London; 1987, hb £14.95, pp590, plates, appendices, notes, index.

## **EXTRA-TERRESTRIALS AMONG US**

by George C. Andrews.

Llewellyn Publications, St Paul, MO; 1986, pb \$9.95, pp300, photos, figs.

Belief in governmental complicity in the UFO mystery took root in the USA long before it did in the UK, and most British ufologists, at least in the early days, could only gaze on in slack-jawed amazement as the stories that em-

erged from the USA became steadily more bizarre: encounters with military planes, crashed saucers, visits to other planets, men-in-black, Space Brothers, and the pervading hints of 'cover-up'. Perhaps the cynicism engendered during the Nixon regime (leading up to Watergate) gave us pause for thought; perhaps it **could** happen here as well? About then the stories began to turn nasty: people and animals made ill by encounters, abductions with their grim and literally inhuman 'examinations', and exposure of various US authorities' efforts at suppression, surveillance and disinformation.

This progression is thoroughly discussed and documented in Timothy Good's fat book, aided by the veritable flood of official records obtained in the USA under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI). In fact Good goes much further and examines the case for government interception of UFO reports in a great many countries. In Britain, it seems, the public, Parliament, and many government departments were being misled by inadequate reports, evasions and even outright denials about an active interest in the subject. If this policy was from the top, it was being denied, even by former prime ministers. Good shovels the hints and suspicions thick and fast supported by very impressive data.

The secrets which cast their shadows across the pages of his book will keep ufologists guessing for a long time. The questions they raise are, without doubt, sinister, if only from the fact that regardless of whether or not a genuine alien phenomenon is involved, the world's most powerful governments and their military and intelligence agencies are on the edge of panic, claims Good, for the UFOs have become taunting symbols of their loss of control of territory (ultimately, planet Earth) with the added threat of superior technology.

It is not difficult to extrapolate these fears into all sorts of 'hard' ufology, of the kind that seems to appeal to the American people. Currently they are in the grip of a great concern over abductions - characterized as psychic rape - fanned by the works of Streiber and Hopkins. The vast majority of Americans can accept the idea of a

government cover-up on UFOs, because it has been a favourite theme of the native popular UFO writers for so long. It is reinforced by direct portrayals in, say, the TV series *UFO*, or the film *Close Encounters*. George Andrews' book fits into but differs from most UFO books in this milieu by being an intelligent and impassioned cry against a powerful system of authority he obviously thinks is capable of perpetrating any dirty trick to mislead the public. His aliens are not necessarily extraterrestrial but vampiric entities feeding off human suffering; the ideal counterpart to the state that feeds off its people (who are kept ignorant of their condition). In a way, Andrews uses a form of 'special pleading' because if what he supposes is correct there would be no satisfactory way to find any 'real' information. But I wonder how any puny, corrupt earthing government can 'cover-up' the interventions of aliens as powerful as those described by Streiber, Hopkins and Andrews, who seem to be able to come and go as they please.

Good discusses the Rendlesham forest incident (of 1980, involving an alleged close contact between aliens and USAF personnel) which is central to *Sky Crash*. Subsequently, Butler, Street and Randles have been severely criticised for errors of fact; nevertheless their book is the most complete account of this perplexing case, which Good has proved the British government to have lied about, denying knowledge of it when there are records to show they were sent a report on it by a key witness. The authors of *Sky Crash* were helped by American colleagues who traced the USAF witnesses and unearthed documents through the FOI. Both they and Good reluctantly agree that the full story might never be revealed.

One of the later investigators of the Rendlesham case was Ralph Noyes, who had retired from a long-term position as head of one of the MoD defense secretariats (DS8) through which UFO reports might have been routed. A *secret property* ('property' being an allusion to Fort's notion that we Earthlings might have belonged to aliens) is in fact a novel, in which Noyes feels free to speculate about UFOs,

government cover-ups, black magic, forteen phenomena etc using his special experience and interests. It reads like a very European dramatization of Andrews' theorizing, and as it happens, is an entertaining and intelligent thriller. But, lest you think an ex-MoD official is going to spill the beans on the way Her Majesty's Government researches UFOs and suppresses or distorts public knowledge of them, you will be disappointed. Remember, he is still bound by the Official Secrets Act. In a long afterword, he confesses his professional acquaintance with UFOs but denies any 'real' knowledge. Additional insights can be gleaned from Good's book, in which Noyes pops up a number of times, suggesting once that the "best" cases were somehow intercepted before they came to his department. Still, you'd think that a work of fiction would be the ideal medium to transmit a few clues (disguised, of course).

Quite frankly, I don't know what (or who) to believe.

Bob Rickard

### THE PYTHAGOREAN SOURCEBOOK AND LIBRARY

compiled & translated by  
Kenneth S. Guthrie,  
edited by David R.  
Fideler.

Phanes Press, Box 6114, Grand Rapids, MI 49516, USA; 1987, hb \$30/£20, pb \$17/£11.50, p361, illus, notes, bib, 2 indexes - UK distribution by Element Books, Longmead, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 8PL.

Full marks to forteen David Fideler who saw a gap in gnostic and neoplatonic publications and set out to fill it with his own publishing company. Even before this sourcebook was published it has earned a lot of praise, and for several reasons. Guthrie's was the first collection of writings about Pythagoras and by his followers, but it went out of print in 1920. Fideler's edition adds much new material: translations by other scholars, new appendices, illustrations, indexes of names and of topics, and a bibliography of over 400 Pythagorean writings and com-

mentaries. There is also a foreword by Joscelyn and a long introduction by Fideler himself.

The book is in two parts. The first collects the various accounts of the life of Pythagoras and his direct teachings; the second is a comprehensive collection of the writings of acknowledged Pythagoreans from the Classical and Hellenistic period. Consequently, the book is a unique and indispensable reference. There is much to interest the forteen here, and not just philosophically. Pythagoras (fl. 500 BC) was a truly balanced all-rounder: a vegetarian, Olympic boxer, and claimed to have full knowledge of his previous lives, just as he had in each of those lives known his origins. His teachings on moral philosophy, music, mathematics, geometry, politics, weights and measures, natural sciences, harmony and proportion, among many other subjects, and his obsession with beans are now accessible to all, and I for one am grateful for it.

Bob Rickard

### THE PERPETUAL MOTION MYSTERY: A continuing quest compiled by RA Ford.

Lindsay Publications, PO Box 12, Bradley, Illinois 60915-0012, USA. 1987, pb \$9.95, pp193, illus, bib.

Described as "a notebook gathered over the years", this manual is a collection of reprints concerning both perpetual motion proper and natural gravitational anomalies of the sort catalogued by William Corliss.

The partly-typewritten compilation opens with the *Perpetual motion handbook* and four issues of the *Perpetual motion journal* (issued by one Irvin R. Barrows in the late 1960s). These publications are themselves full of photographic reproductions of earlier material, notably a long article from a 1906 issue of *Cassier's magazine*, and they include worthwhile bibliographies alongside some charmingly naive material. Barrows was not, in fact, particularly interested in mechanical perpetual motion; his hypothesis depended on entropy reversal, and you will have to find a physicist to explain why this is theoretically impossible.

The *Journals* are followed by articles dealing with the gravitational theories of Descartes, LeSage and Charles F. Brush. Towards the end of the book there is a chapter on the Orffyrean wheels which includes material not incorporated in Gould's widely-cited account of this intriguing case. In sum: interesting and eclectic, but the chaotically varied typography is often hard to follow.

Mike Dash

### W.B. YEATS AND THE TRIBES OF DANU

by Peter Alderson Smith.  
Colin Smythe, Box 6, Gerrards Cross, Bucks; 1987, hb £19.50, pp350, notes, refs, glossary, bib, index.

We are fortunate to have this fresh analysis of the Irish fairy faith, because Smith is a forteen and well aware of the role of anomalous phenomena in the belief systems of archaic peoples. Overall, this book is a critique of the way Yeats used the fairy mythology in his work; however, of primary interest to us is that the first part of the book deals with the antiquity of the mythology, while the middle part concerns the folklore on the subject collected over the last 150 years or so.

Part one examines the ancestors of the Irish, particularly the Tuatha de Danann, and the extant evidence (in old texts) is discussed in the light of the three main theories: that they were spirits of the dead; that they were gods; and that they are a folk-memory of an ancient but human race. The Irish emerge as a peculiar people; whereas the early literature of most nations (particularly the Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon) has "the emphasis on human heroism," writes Smith, "In Early Irish literature, on the other hand, no story is worthwhile unless it is replete with wonders." And the chiefest source of these are the fairyfolk. His unusual conclusion is that while other folk had gods and ghosts, the Ancient Irish had fairies.

Peter Smith's erudition informs every line, and this book will be a valuable companion to Evans Wentz's classic on the fairy faith.

Bob Rickard

## IF THIS BE MAGIC

by Guy Lyon Playfair.

*Jonathan Cape, London; 1985, hb £9.95, pp284, refs, notes, index.*

Playfair opens with a review of some remarkable cases of patients treated by hypnosis, then uses that as a springboard to examine the medical mysteries involved when supposedly incurable or irreversible conditions are cured or reversed. The discussion widens to explore the mysteries of hypnosis generally and tangential topics such as 'faith healing', miraculous cures, research into psi powers. All the while, Playfair is preparing us for his analysis of the seemingly magical world of the human imagination, the strength of will and the power of belief.

Playfair turns the usual line of reasoning on its head: the real magic of these unexploited human attributes is not their ability to get us well again (in ways which often confound conventional medical and biological thinking), but, when used properly, to prevent us ever becoming less than whole and healthy in the first place. The trick, naturally, is in developing the right modes of thought, and the clues, says Playfair, are around us all to see and within the ability of all to adapt.

Playfair writes well and wisely, illuminating many shadowy areas of the mystery of the human condition. He shows great sensitivity without getting bogged down in sentimentality, and manages to bring the reader through feeling inspired. It is well-researched and usefully-referenced. In view of the increasing importance of understanding the creative powers of the imagination as they manifest in most area of anomalous perception, Playfair proves to be a sane and knowledgeable tutor.

Bob Rickard

## STARS, GALAXIES, COSMOS

compiled by William R. Corliss.

*Sourcebook Project, Box 107, Glen Arm, MD 21057, USA; 1987, hb \$17.95, pp240, refs, 4 indexes.*

This is the 7th volume in Corliss' projected 25-volume series *The Catalog of Anomalies*, and concentrates upon stellar and

cosmological phenomena which contradict, or not explained by, current astrophysical theories. Because this frontier of human knowledge is continually changing, many of these anomalies seem easier to accept. Their nature, too, needs careful explanation and Corliss, an experienced science-writer, works hard to make the most abstruse and technical details understandable to dolts like myself.

A list of contents would be long and technical so I will omit it for once. If you are interested in astronomy, or teach or research the subject, you need this book as a frontier guide to where the celestial mysteries and action are. As before, I would urge every school library to subscribe to the series. They are packed with data (no room for stuffiness or waffle) and guaranteed to spark curiosity.

Bob Rickard

## THE CRIMINAL PROSECUTION AND CAPITAL PUNISHMENT OF ANIMALS:

**The lost history of Europe's animal trials**  
by EP Evans.

*Faber and Faber, 1987, pb £4.95, pp336, notes, appndxs, bib, index.*

This welcome reprint of Evans's 1906 classic deals with one of history's 'damned' subjects - the numerous (190 cases cited in an appendix) and widespread prosecution of animals, corpses and even inanimate objects (such as a statue which had the temerity to fall and crush a passer-by) which had somehow transgressed human law or caused human suffering.

The cases which Evans salvaged from a mass of primary source material range from ancient Greece to modern Switzerland and most fall into two broad categories: those of animals (frequently pigs, for some reason) prosecuted for attacking people, and those of swarms of insects solemnly excommunicated for devouring crops or spreading pestilence.

The stories are more than simply curiosities. Evans suggests - and in a new introduction the Cambridge philosopher Nicholas

Humphries agrees with him - that the true purpose of the trials was psychological. By subjecting animals to elaborately correct legal proceedings, men tried to create order from terrifying disorder. They had (and still have) a fear of lawlessness and of things not understood; the trials confirmed the ascendancy of *homo sapiens* and imposed human law upon natural anarchy. Viewed thus, Evans's theories suggest new approaches to such fortaen topics as animal trials and councils, funerals and wakes.

Mike Dash

## MAN AND THE NATURAL WORLD:

**Changing attitudes in England 1500-1800**  
by Keith Thomas.

*Penguin 1984, pb £4.95, pp426, notes, index.*

A book from the author of *Religion and the decline of magic* which contains a good deal of interest on the evolution of modern attitudes towards nature and the natural world. Valuable background material, particularly for those who approach fortaena from a folkloric point of view.

Mike Dash

## BOOKLET REVIEWS

**STRANGE SHEFFIELD: Legends, Folklore and Mysteries of Hallamshire** by David Clarke and Rob Wilson. This shows the vast sweep of odd stories, reports and beliefs you can find on your own doorstep. Here we are treated to detailed and intelligent analysis of local Robin Hood legends, ghost stories, Spring Heeled Jack sightings and the theories surrounding the origin of the dragon of Wantley. The authors have obviously conducted a great deal of research in the library and in the field. As a consequence we are able to appreciate the complex inter-relationship between landscape, history, myth, legend, folklore and mysteries, which infiltrates contemporary beliefs and attitudes. Certainly if you believe that Sheffield is a half-derelict smog-filled industrial throw-back populated by beer-swilling

morons, then this should make you change your mind! □ 1987, price unknown, pp114, refs., map, illus. Available from David Clarke, 6 Old Retford Road, Handsworth, Sheffield S13 9QZ.

Nigel Watson.

**ANGLES OF COINCIDENCE: Rennes-le-Chateau and the Magdalen mystery** by Ron Weighell. An interesting potted guide to this famous mystery of secret societies, lost treasures and clues hidden in art and architecture. Artwork by Nick Maloret; edited by Rosmary Pardoe. □ 1987, pp17, illus, bib. Available from The Haunted Library: Flat One, 36 Hamilton Street, Hoole, Chester CH2 3JQ. 1987, £1.10, overseas £1.20 – or Richard Fawcett, 61 Tecomwas Drive, Uncasville, CT 06382, USA at \$3.00.

**TEN MILLION RAINBOWS: The first Newsletter anthology**, edited by Sid Birchby, being a selection of six articles from this celebrated and venerable fortean informal (presumably authored by Sid himself) which sparked vigorous correspondence subsequently. The subjects are the electro-magnetic spectrum, ghost houses, a buzzing sound from a Hertfordshire dolmen, Jack o' Lanterns, levitation, and the recovery of the 'wasp in a wig' passage excised from Lewis Carroll's *Through the looking-glass*. 1987, £1.75/\$4.00, pp14, illus. Available from Sid Birchby: 40 Parris Wood Ave, Didsbury, Manchester M20 0ND.

**MYSTERIOUS LAKE PEND OREILLE AND ITS 'MONSTER': Fact and folklore** by James R. McLeod. A detailed report on the phenomenon of this northern Idaho lake gathered during an enterprising long-term project by the Cryptozoology Club of the North Idaho College. The early sightings and rumours, the media circus, the folklore, the likely theories, the hoaxes, and correlation with similar reports from other lakes are supplemented with exemplary chronologies, listings, appendices, references and a bibliography. There is a superb chapter on separating fact from fiction. Reading it after working on Meurger's book

[see my article elsewhere in this issue] was like *deja vu*, for at this relatively unknown regional lake, all the major facets and themes discussed by Meurger – eg. a bottomless lake, the coldness of the water, underground caverns and tunnels, the smooth-back and ridged-back descriptions and many other 'motifs' – can be found encapsulated here. Highly recommended, not just for its subject-matter, but for the thoroughness of its research and its presentation. □ 1987, \$4.00, pp97, illus, refs, bib, index. Available from Cryptozoology Club, North Idaho College, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814, USA. □ RJMR

## BOOKS ALSO RECEIVED

● **MEDICINE, MIND & MAGIC** by Guy Lyon Playfair. *Aquarian Press*, 1987, pb £7.99, pp284. A reprint of Playfair's excellent 1985 work on psychic ability and hypnotism in medicine.

● **THE WAY OF THE HEART: the Rajneesh movement** by Judith Thompson and Paul Heelas. *Aquarian Press*, 1986, pb £5.99, photos. A reasonable introduction to the career, teachings and followers of one of the more colourful of contemporary gurus.

● **THE NIGHT-SIDE OF NATURE** by Catherine Crowe. Introduction by Colin Wilson. *Aquarian Press*, 1987, pb £8.99, pp451. A welcome re-issue of this long out of print 1848 classic of paranormal and fortean phenomena. What a pity the publishers failed to equip it with an index, to the great annoyance of those who have tried to locate her splendid material in the original.

● **LE GRAND CARNAGE** by Michel Granger. *Vertiges/Carrere, Paris*, 1986, pb 85F, pp381, plates, bib. The first French full-length treatment of the mysterious plague of cattle mutilation in the USA.

● **THE SCIENCE OF THE PARANORMAL: The last frontier** by Lawrence LeShan. *Aquarian Press*, 1987, pb £6.99, pp208, notes, refs, index. A retitled and revised re-issue of LeShan's *From Newton to ESP*. LeShan is one of the most intelligible and sensitive commentators of psychic re-

search, here expounding his theories of relative reality, consciousness, ESP, and parapsychology.

● **GUIDA AI DRAGHI E MOSTRI IN ITALIA** by Umberto Cordier. *Sugarco Edizioni, Milan*, 1986, pb L. 15.000, pp272, illus, refs, index. A fortean survey of Italy, discussing the sites and literary evidence of dragons, serpents and basilisk, pumas and other 'alien animals', hairy humanoids, giants, and the native megalithic civilisation. A great pity its not in English.

● **WESTCOUNTRY HAUNTINGS** by Peter Underwood (1986, pb £2.50, pp96) A collection of modern stories, arranged by place alphabetically, many published for the first time. **PARANORMAL IN THE WESTCOUNTRY** (1986, pb £2.50, pp96), and **SUPERNATURAL ADVENTURE** (1987, pb £2.50, pp96) both by Michael Williams, being his personal investigations into healers, megalithic sites, haunted places, dowisers, a historian of Atlantis via automatic writing, mediums and other psychics, and ghost hunters. **SUPERNATURAL IN SOME-SET** by Rosemary Clinch (1986, pb £2.50, pp112) The author wanders the county interviewing its astrologers, psychics, dowisers, herbalists, and healers, tramps a ley line and visits a few haunted places. All four books are published by Bossiney Books, Land's End, St Teath, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 3JH. These well-illustrated books, packed with photographs and drawings, celebrate the magic of the Westcountry, an almost mystical realm of haunted houses, ancient legends, impressive megaliths, and a rich variety of residents who practice or pursue some aspect of the paranormal. A small press with consistently good publications.

## Truss Fund

Our grateful thanks for their donations go to: Ron Bishop, Michael Ferrier, Peter Garde, Peter Hassel, John F. Jackman, Walter J. Langbein, Nick Maloret, Chris Mikul, Ray Nelke, John N. Peldyak, Sven Rosén.

# Classified Exchanges

**FT** welcomes an exchange of periodicals with those of mutual interest. This is not a complete list of our exchanges; it only includes those periodicals received since the last listing, and is free to those periodicals in the interests of mutual furtherance. Our headings are not definitive, but for convenience only. We use the following symbols: # = issue number; 'Pay' = to whom cheques etc should be payable; 'O' = Overseas rate; 'E' = European rate; 'NFC' = No foreign currency, pay in funds of country of origin. ★ = Change of details since last listing (eg. new address or rates), or a new publication. **Please mention FT when responding to these notices.**

★ There have been a good number of changes to addresses and rates since our last listing, and we initiate the new practice of indicating these with a ☆. We draw your attention to what we think are the two most important developments: *AFR Newsletter*, a participatory forum for those seriously interested in developing better research methods and suitable archival techniques to cope with the Fortean information explosion; and *Strange Magazine*, being Mark Chorvinsky's entry into Fortean publishing. On the showing of this splendid first issue, we ourselves will have to look to our laurels. □ **RJMR**

## COMPUTER & ARCHIVES

★ **AFR NEWSLETTER** - A newsletter for Fortean and others concerned with developing database (including 'manual' systems) and archive techniques to cope with the information storage, retrieval and preservation in our field. Edited for *Archives for Fortean Research* by the able and enthusiastic Scott Parker. Every serious researcher should support it. For contribution or exchange. Write: Scott Parker: 1035 Iris, Beaumont, TX 77706, USA.

★ **BLACK CHIP** - A journal of computing for anarchists. 4/yr. £3. Pay: Richard Alexander: Cwm Gwen Hall, Pencader, Dyfed SA39 9HA, Wales.

➔ **THE COMPUTER UFO NEWSLETTER** - discussion journal for applications of computers to UFO research and databases. Edited by Maurizio Verga. Appx 6/yr. For journal exchange or equivalent of 15,000 Italian lire. Inquiries to: CUFON: via Matteotti 85, 22072 Cerninate (Como), Italy.

## CRYPTOZOODOLOGY

★ **BILK** - A newsletter on water monsters generally, with the emphasis on Europe, from Ulrich Magin, who seems to have his finger on every cryptozoological pulse, before and after the event. Recommended. The title is an acronym for Behemoth (freshwater monsters), Isis (mermaids), Leviathan (sea serpents), and Kraken (giant cephalopods). 6/yr. E:£4. US:£8. Pay: Ulrich Magin: Stuhlbruderhofstr. 4, 6704 Mutterstadt, West Germany.

★ **CHAMP CHANNELS** - News of the Lake Champlain monster and related information; edited by its energetic investigator, Joseph W. Zarzynski. 4/yr. \$9. O:\$10. NFC. Lake Champlain Phenomena Investigation: Box 2134, Wilton, NY 12866, USA.

➔ **CREATURE CHRONICLES** - Fortean news from Ohio; for exchange. 2/yr. Inquiries to Ron Schaffner: Box 44062, Cincinnati, OH 45244, USA.

➔ **CRYPTOZOODOLOGY** - official organ of the International Society of Cryptozoology - expedition and field reports, in-depth studies, debates and scholarly theorizing - essential for serious cryptozoologists. 1/yr. Apply to I SC: Box 43070, Tucson, AZ 85733, USA.

➔ **ISC NEWSLETTER** - Cryptozoological news, views and correspondence. 4/yr. You get this and *Cryptozoology* (above) when you join the International Society of Cryptozoology: Box 43070, Tucson, AZ 85733, USA. Annual membership is \$25.

➔ **NESSLETTER** - The latest news of sightings, expeditions and controversies about Nessie and her cousins from the Ness Information Service. Recommended for keeping in touch. 12/yr. £2.50. O:\$9. NIS: Rip Hepple: Huntshildford, St Johns Chapel, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham DL13 1RQ.

## EARTH MYSTERIES

★ **CAERDROIA** - This well-illustrated and enthusiastically produced journal, edited by Jeff Saward, pioneers research into and cataloguing the world's mazes and labyrinths, how they were constructed, and the cosmologies they represent. Shows what you can do with scant resources. Apx 4/yr. £4. E:£5.50. O:\$13. The Caerdroia Project: 53 Thundersley Grove, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex SS7 3EB.

➔ **THE LEY HUNTER** - Still the flagship of earth mysteries and ley research. 3 issues + 1 supplement peryear. £5. E:£7. O:\$20(air)\$15(surf). TLH: Box 5, Brecon, Powys LD3 7LU.

★ **NORTHERN EARTH MYSTERIES** - Journal of the Northern Earth Mysteries Group. Sample: £1. Edited by Rob Wilson & David Clarke. NEM: 103 Derbyshire Lane, Norton Lees, Sheffield S8 9EN, South Yorkshire.

➔ **STONEHENGE VIEWPOINT** - Each issue is filled with informative and imaginative explorations of every aspect of megalithic culture, and with affection for Isaac Vail's 'Ice Canopy' thesis. 8/yr. \$10. O:\$15. SV: 2821 De La Vina St, Santa Barbara, CA 93105, USA. UK Agency: c/o 3rd Floor, 35 Gt Russell St, London WC1.

➔ **TOUCHSTONE** - Newsletter for Surrey Earth Mysteries, edited by Jimmy Goddard. Enquiries to: Touchstone: 25 Albert Rd, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey.

## FOLKLORE

★ **FLS NEWS** - A more informal forum than the Folklore Society' journal (see *Folklore*, below) covering events, news, library acquisitions, queries, brief articles, notices etc. Quite interesting really. Free to members of the FS, but £2 to others. 2/yr. Edited by Stephen Roud & Paul Smith. Correspondence to Stephen Roud: 18 Amberley Grove,

Addiscombe, Surrey CR0 6ND.

➤ **FOLKLORE** - Journal of the Folklore Society; every issue has some erudite material directly or indirectly related to Fortean studies. 2/yr. £15. O: \$35. Pay: The Folklore Society: University College, Gower St, London WC1E 6BT. Membership includes *FLS News* (above) and access to their unique library.

➤ **FOLKLORE FRONTIERS** - Mapping new frontiers of urban belief tales, tall-stories, and foaf-lore, but including book and magazine reviews on editor Paul Screeton's longstanding interests in Fortean, earth mysteries and modern shamanism. A5 format. 4 issues for £3. O: \$8 (surf), \$12 (air). NFC. Pay: Paul Screeton: 5 Egton Drive, Seaton Carew, Hartlepool, Cleveland TS25 2AT.

## FORTEAN (STRICTLY AND LOOSELY)

➤ **ASSAP NEWS** - Newsletter of the Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena. 6/yr. Free to members. Enquiries to Membership Secretary Sue Laws: 130b Southwood Road, New Eltham, London SE9 3QN.

➤ **CRUX** - A vibrant personal commentary on Fortean events, loosely connected with editor Tom Adams' two main interests, Texas and cattle mutilations. Much of humour and interest. 7/yr. \$5. O: \$6. NFC. Pay: Thomas R. Adams: Box 1094, Paris, TX 75460, USA.

➤ **FATE** - the grandpappy of Fortean magazines; founded in 1948 and still as vital and relevant as ever. Its articles are excellent and wide-ranging; its letters and readers' experiences are often gems; its book reviews are always informative; we'd buy it for Curtis Fuller's regular, informed column, which should be mandatory reading for Forteans. \$15/yr. O: \$19. Available on UK newsstands at £1.10 a copy.

➤ **THE GATE** - 'covers a wide range of paranormal occurrences'. 4/yr. \$1/per copy. Pay: Beth Robbins: Box 43518, Richmond Heights, OH 44143, USA.

★ **HIDDEN HISTORY** - organ of the Anomalous Phenomenon Research Association. Promising little publication with an emphasis on historical and prehistorical mysteries - it supercedes APRA's *Anomalous Phenomena Review* which is now extinct. Edited by Robert Morrell and S. Henley. 4/yr. £4.60. APRA: 443 Meadow Lane, Nottingham NG2 3GB.

➤ **INFO JOURNAL** - One of the handful of essential journals for Forteans. 4/yr. \$12. International Fortean Organization: Box 367, Arlington, VA 22210, USA.

➤ **KADATH** - A well-produced journal about forgotten civilizations, and their origins, ruins & relics; soundly researched articles, in French. 4/yr. 800 FB. E: 1000 FB. O: 1100 FB. Editor: Patrick Ferryn. Kadath: 6 Boulevard St-Michel, Boite 6, 1150 Bruxelles, Belgium.

➤ **JOURNAL OF BORDERLAND RESEARCH** - Almost legendary organ of the Borderland Sciences Research Foundation, founded by N. Meade Layne in 1945, and continued, between 1959-1985 by Riley Hansard Crabb. Now edited by Thomas J. Brown. It deserves to be a legend for publishing regularly all these years! Covers happenings, speculation and 'sciences' relating to the "borderland between the visible and the invisible", from consciousness and New Physics to UFOs and Fortean. 6/yr. \$20/yr. Overseas \$20 (surf) \$30 (air). Pay: Borderland Sciences Research Foundation: Box 549, Vista, CA 92083, USA.

## ➤ JOURNAL OF THE FORTEAN RESEARCH CENTRE

- Devoted, mainly to overlaps between UFOs and anomalous phenomena. We complained of not seeing any issues beyond the first, but these must still be in a sack in the Post Office's Bermuda Triangle depot. Editor Ray W. Boeche has sent us replacements, which record the FRC's efforts in tracing UFO-related US government documents (including MJ-12). 4/yr. \$15. FRC: Box 94627, Lincoln, NB 68509, USA.

★ **JOURNAL OF METEOROLOGY** - Frequently has items of Fortean meteorology. 12/yr. Has a variety of sub rates from £29. J.Met: 54 Frome Rd, Bradford-on-Avon, Wilts BA15 1LD.

➤ **JOURNAL OF VAMPIROLOGY** - Editor John L. Vellutini, who writes most of the material, is developing a fine exposition, covering every aspect of historical, criminal, mythological, pathological and psychopathological vampirism. 5/yr. \$10. NFC. JOV: Box 881631, San Francisco, CA 94188, USA.

➤ **NEWSLETTER** - Informal, participation newsletter on many topics of Fortean and allied interests. 4/yr. \$1 each. Pay: Sid Birchby: 40 Parris Wood Ave, Didsbury, Manchester M20 0ND.

➤ **PASU DATA EXCHANGE** - Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained, edited by veteran investigator Stan Gordon. Mainly for exchange. Contact PASU: 6 Oakhill Ave, Greensburg, PA 15601, USA.

➤ **PURSUIT** - The journal of the Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained, and essential reading for informed Forteans. Every issue is packed with good things, including instalments of Carl Pabst's deciphering of Fort's notes. 4/yr. Memb: \$12. O: rates on application. SITU: Box 265, Little Silver, NJ 07739, USA.

➤ **SKEPTICAL INQUIRER** - the organ of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. A viewpoint that should not be ignored. High standard of attacking scepticism, with much serious and detailed dissection in each fat issue. Edited by Kendrick Frazier. 4/yr. \$18.00. Overseas: add \$3.50 (surf), \$8 (air). US funds only. SI: Box 229, Buffalo, NY 14215, USA.

★ **STRANGE MAGAZINE** - Major new Fortean periodical edited by the talented and enthusiastic Mark Chorvinsky, with features, columns, interviews and a variety of columns and other contributions by many of the best Forteans around. Presentation uses state-of-the-art word-processing and laser printer. The first issue is substantial with 84 large-format pages. We advise you to take advantage of the introductory offer of 4 issues for \$14.95 or O: \$18.95. Sample issue: \$3.95 / \$2.95. Strange: Box 2246, Rockville, MD 20852, USA.

➤ **ZETETIC SCHOLAR** - On-going bibliographies, and crackling debates between top pioneering scholars in their fields and their critics, and further replies, all in the same fat issue. You are not informed until you've read it. Edited by Marcello Truzzi. Apx 2/yr. US: \$15. O: \$20. NFC. ZS: Dept. of Sociology, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, USA.

## PSI & PSYCHOLOGY

➤ **AASC NEWSLETTER** - organ of the Association for the



Anthropological Study of Consciousness. Variety of topics, including multiple-personality, shamanism, 'past-life regression', deprogramming, psi-related processes, altered states, healing, symbolic studies of myth. 4/yr. \$20. O: \$24. AASC Treasurer Priscilla Lee: Box 4032, Irvine, CA 92716, USA.

★ **ARCHAEUS** - Fat. packed annual of the Archaeus Project, an intelligent and energetic inquest on all aspects of PSI, parapsychology and related anomalous phenomena. Neat presentation and good thought-provoking reading, skilfully edited by Dennis Stillings. Range of subscriptions from \$20 upwards. O: \$30 (surf). Membership extra. Archaeus Project: 629 Twelfth St, Minneapolis, MN 55414, USA.

➤ **ARTIFEX** - Bimonthly newsletter of the Archaeus Project - see *Archaeus* above.

★ **GHOST TRACKER'S NEWSLETTER** - News and articles about hauntings and research. Edited by Dale Kaczmarek. 4/yr. \$10. O: \$18. Ghost Research Society: Box 205, Oak Lawn, IL 60454-0205, USA.

➤ **JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH** - respected organ of the SPR; its long articles are in the forefront of academic research and debate; its book reviews are valuable perspectives. 3/yr. Membership: £13/\$34. SPR: 1 Adam & Eve Mews, London W3 6UG.

★ **METAPSYCHOLOGY** - "the Journal of Discarnate Intelligence". A good presentation, edited by Tam Mossman. Has an advertising supplement called *Rainbow Pages*. 4/yr. \$20. Metapsychology: Box 3295, Charlottesville, VA 22903, USA.

★ **PSYCHIC CONNECTIONS** - a newsletter of mainly ads and contacts. 4/yr. \$10. O: \$15. PC: Box 670022, Marietta, GA 30066, USA.

## UFOLOGY

★ **ACUFOS BULLETIN** - News, cases, reports and reviews from the active and respected Australian Centre for UFO Studies. There are also monthly case summaries in their *Reports Digest* supplement. Editor: Mark Moravec. Enquiries to, ACUFOS: Box 728, Lane Cove, NSW 2066, Australia.

★ **AFU NEWSLETTER** - irregular organ of the Swedish group Archives for UFO Research (AFU), edited by Hakan Blomqvist, in English. AFU: Box 11027, S-600 11 Norrköping, Sweden.

★ **AMSKAYA** - newsletter of the STAR Fellowship - dedicated to peaceful contact with friendly aliens. 4/yr. £2. Pay: Jimmy Goddard: 25 Albert Road, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey..

★ **APRO BULLETIN** - Essential reading for current US investigations from the venerable Aerial Phenomena Research Organization. 12/yr. Memb: \$15. O: \$18. APRO: 3597 W. Grape Drive, Tucson, AZ 85741, USA.

➤ **EARTH** - entertaining magazine of 'paganism, ufology, mysticism, etc' edited in the kind of over-enthusiastic fanzine-style that you either hate or enjoy, by Paul Bennet. 6/yr. \$4. Sample for 60p + stamps. Earth: 61 Ranelagh Ave, Ravenscliffe, Bradford BD10 0HF.

★ **ITALIAN UFO REPORTER** - English language abstracts of the CISU journal *UFO: Rivista di Informazione Ufologica*. See *UFO* (below).

➤ **JOURNAL FÜR UFO-FORSCHUNG** - articles, cases,

reviews - in German. Organ of Gesellschaft zur Erforschung des UFO-Phänomens (GEP). Inquiries to: JFUF: postfach 2361, D-5880 Lüdenscheid 1, West Germany.

➤ **FLYING SAUCER REVIEW** - Still essential reading for ufologists after 30 years on the front line! 6/yr. Inquire for rates. FSR Publications Ltd: Snodland, Kent ME6 5HJ.

★ **INTERNATIONAL UFO REPORTER** - organ of the J Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies now relocated to the address below. Edited by Jerome Clark. Articles, case studies. 6/yr. Membership enquiries: CUFO: 2457 W. Peterson, Chicago, IL 60659, USA.

➤ **MAGONIA** - The flagship of 'post-modernist' ufology - debates the ufology, folklore, anthropology, sociology interface - in an impressive word-processed A4 format. 4/yr. £2.50. US: \$5. (surf). O: £3.00. Pay: John Rimmer: John Dee Cottage, 5 James Terrace, Mortlake Churchyard, London SW14 8HB.

➤ **MUFON UFO JOURNAL** - organ of the Mutual UFO Network - a model of regularity, sanity, and increasingly valuable for those outside the USA who need to keep in touch despite the decreasing number of authoritative US UFO journals, edited by Dennis Stacy. 12/yr. \$25. O: \$30 (US funds only). MUFON: 103 Oldtowne Rd, Seguin, TX 78155-4099, USA.

➤ **NONSIAMOSOLI** - UFOs and ET contacts with apocalyptic overtones - in Italian. Inquiries to: Nonsiamosoli: via Asti 23, 63018 Porto Sant'Elpidio, (Ascoli Piceno), Italy.

★ **NORTHERN UFO NEWS** - News & investigations from the north of England, including a ufological commentary by editor Jenny Randles. We find it an invaluable overview of British ufology. 6/yr. £5.40. Pay: [Address correction] NUFON: 37 Heathbank Road, Cheadle Heath, Stockport, Cheshire SK3 0UP.

➤ **NOTIZARIO UFO** - organ of the Centro Ufologico Nazionale, edited by Dr Robert Pinotti. Latest release contains the English text of Pinotti's paper to the IAA congress on Extraterrestrial intelligence. Inquiries to: CUN: Via Odorico da Pordenone 36, 50127 Firenze, Italy.

➤ **NUFOIS NEWS** - organ of the National UFO Investigation Society, published by the same team that puts out *Hidden History* (see under *FORTEAN* above) - very slight for an allegedly 'national 'newspaper' (their words). Inquiries to: NUFOIS: 443 Meadow Lane, Nottingham NG2 3GB.

★ **OVNI PRESENCE** - organ of the Association d'Etude sur les Soucoupes Volantes (AESV). Plush presentation of current cases and controversies in French ufology. The June issue, however, gives an overview of British ufology. In French. Edited by Perry Petrakis. Write for rates. AESV: Boite Postale 324, 13611 Aix-en-Provence Cedex 1, France.

➤ **QUEST: THE JOURNAL OF UFO INVESTIGATION** - organ of the Yorkshire UFO Society (YUFOS) - news, investigations, articles - vigorous example of the new breed of British UFO journals; edited by G.W. Birdsall. 6/yr. £6. E: £8. O: \$15. Pay: YUFOS: 106 Lady Ann Rd, Soothill, Batley, W.Yorks WF17 0PY.

➤ **UFO** - organ of the newly formed Centro Italiano Studi Ufologici (CISU). Well presented in A4 format, in Italian. Inquiries to CISU: Corso Vittorio Emanuele 108, I-10121 Torino, Italy.

★ **UFO AKUELLT** - organ of the Riksgöranisationen UFO-Sverige. Very professional presentation in A4 format with inside colour, in Swedish. News, articles and investigations. Inquire for rates. UFO-A: Box 175, 733 00 Sala, Sweden.

★ **UFO BELGIUM** - Belgian/Dutch UFO magazine (formerly *UFO 21*). Inquiries to Marc Broux, Koning Albertstraat 40, 3500 Hasselt, Belgium.

★ **UFOBRIGANTIA** - journal of the West Yorkshire UFO Research Group (WYUFORG), edited by Andy Roberts. Local cases, columns, and good articles. 6/yr. £5.50. 0: on application. [Address correction] WYUFORG: 84 Elland Road, Brighouse, W.Yorks HD6 2QR.

★ **UFO INFORMATION** (JSPS) - organ of the Japan Space Phenomena Society (JSPS), edited by Shin-ichiro Namiki. In English. Promises to be vital for Japanese cases and discussion. Has the luxury of hand-pasted colour pictures inside. 4/yr. \$20. International money orders only. JSPS: 5-2, Kamiyama-cho, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo, Japan 150.

★ **UFO NEWSCLIPPING SERVICE** - Monthly collections of clippings from all over the world, with several pages of Fortean too. 12/yr. Apply for rates. UFONS: Route 1, Box 200, Plumerville, AK 72127, USA.

★ **UFO NYT** - organ of the Skandinavisk UFO Information (SUFOI). Well produced in A4 format. Edited by Kin Moller Hansen. Write for rates. SUFOI: Postbox 6, 2820 Gentofte, Denmark.

### OTHERS (LAST BUT NOT LEAST)

★ **BIZARRISM** - Not so much Fortean as surrealist montages of Fortean data. Editor: Chris Mikul, 1/119 Enmore Rd, Enmore, Sydney, NSW 2042, Australia.

★ **CRITIQUE** - 'A journal of conspiracies & metaphysics'. Book size and thickness; much of interest. 3/yr. \$15. 0: \$25 (air). Critique c/o Bob Banner: PO Box 11368, Santa Rosa, CA 95406, USA.

★ **EXTRANCE** - a limited edition surrealist publication, with intriguing graphics and text. Editor: Peter Overton: 33 Meredith St, Great Lever, Bolton BL3 2DD

★ **FACTSHEET FIVE** - a review magazine. If you think our listings are long take a look at this. About 60 close-typed pages of (mostly USA) small periodicals and pamphleteers, and that's only the ones they know about. Edited by Mike Gunderloy. 4/yr. Single issue: \$2. \$8 (4 issues).

★ **LIGHT TIMES** - Unclassifiable, certifiable, sporadic. Edited by Art Wand. ?/yr. \$3. [Address correction] Light Times: Box 84366, Los Angeles, CA 90073, USA.

★ **LLEWELLYN'S NEW TIMES** - basically a publisher's catalogue of "astrology and New Age books" augmented by extracts and articles. Inquiries to: Llewellyn Publications: Box 64383-864, St Paul, MN 55164-0383, USA.

★ **NETWORK NEWS** - newsletter of the Runaway Suicide Prevention Network, paying attention to some of the causes of youth suicides, copycat suicides, and suicide clusters. Inquiries to NN: Human Services Development Institute, University of Southern Maine, 96 Falmouth St, Portland, ME 04103, USA.

★ **NNIDNID** - surreality in prose and pictures from editor Doc Shiels, talented family and other contributors. Single issue from £2 (collector's specials available). Pay: MCF Shiels: 3 Vale View, Ponsanooth, Truro, Cornwall.

★ **NOTES FROM OBLIVION** - punk-surrealism; an off-shoot of the SubGenius. Edited by Rev. Dr. Mr. Sensitive: 626 Paddock Lane, Libertyville, IL 60048, USA.

★ **SHAVERTRON** - "the only source of post-Deluge Shaverania". 3/yr. \$10. 0: \$11 (surf) \$13 (air). Pay: Richard Toronto: Box 248, Vallejo, CA 94590, USA.

★ **SMILE** - definitive bad taste mag for those who find de Sade, post modernism and situationist theory conservative. Approx 28,000 words per issue in glossy 2-colour cover. Buy it and be damned! Sample: 75p (NFC). From Counter Distribution, 308C Camberwell New Road, London SE5.

★ **SPIRAL** - paganism, wicca, occult-fiction, star-magick, supernatural, shamanism etc. Incorporating *Anima*. An energetic and positive example of much needed synthesis. 4/yr. £5. 0: \$14 (surf) \$18 (air). Pay: Spiral Publications: 8 King St, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9JY.

★ **TIDE** - a new international maritime journal aiming to cross-pollinate Green technology with traditional ship-building and sailing. Edited by Dick Gwynn. 4/yr. £10. USA: \$25. Elsewhere: US\$30. Tide: Bideford Ship Company, Pattard Water, Hartland, Devon EX39 6BX.

★ **WORLD GOODWILL NEWSLETTER** - news of worldwide projects seeking to counterbalance the negative aspects of this world. 4/yr. Free sample. World Goodwill: Suite 54, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EF.

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meaningless. In detail and in practice, of course many scientists have behaved inflexibly and dogmatically, and I am the first to deplore the fact and blame those responsible. But apart from the fact that fortean phenomena are by no means the only victims of scientific hyperconservatism – many scientific innovations have suffered a similar fate – the charge is wrongly directed. To equate what individual scientists do with what science is, is to perpetrate a stupid and dangerous confusion.

**Hilary Evans**  
Blackheath, London.

## THAT YETI PHOTOGRAPH

I find it quite disturbing that so much fortean and cryptozoological ink is being spent examining and re-examining the entirely motionless, erect shape photographed by Tony Wooldridge, which by his own account did not move for 45 minutes. [See FT48, p38ff.] This examination, furthermore, has had few words of caution. Considering the more convincing evidence from the Pacific Northwest for Sasquatch / Bigfoot, I find it rather interesting that so many are moving so fast to embrace the “yeti bush” as a viable abominable snowperson. To see even Napier call himself a “yeti-devotee” so quickly is indeed more of a mystery than the photo’s origin!

**Loren Coleman,**  
Portland, Maine.

The ambiguous blotch in FT48 (p40–42) is the evidence of nothing more than Mr Rickard’s continuing credulity. I imagine that if Mr

Wooldridge had stared at his putative yeti for a week it would still have remained in place, auto-kinetic effect notwithstanding.

**Brian Chapman**  
Victoria, BC.

*[Bob Rickard replies: Ouch! I gave Tony Wooldridge’s experience and evidence space because I believe it deserves our consideration. I had met Tony and was impressed with his honesty. It is not often that I (at least) get close to a Yeti witness of any sort, and judgement of his evidence I leave to those more qualified than myself. Our correspondents are quite right to raise doubts, and it is up to the quality of the evidence to withstand them in the hoped-for discussion.]*

Loren’s thinly veiled accusation, that FT has neglected a huge amount of North American evidence and reportage is also correct, but not out of ignorance or apathy. I must throw the ball back into the court of our informed American and Canadian friends. We can only print what we get, and I for one would like to get more contributions about American cryptozoology into FT.

*As for me being credulous; if you believe that, you’ll believe anything! ]*

## BEYOND THE SKY

A brief note that might interest anyone researching UFO encounters in ancient sources. In *Taoism and Chinese Religion* (University of Massachusetts, 1981, p.220), Henri Maspero discusses the folklore of the Black Tai of Upper Tonkin, which he studied in the early part of the 20th century. There he mentions ancestors who came from “beyond the sky”; but there’s nothing to suggest aliens here.

The Black Tai are a fairly primitive agricultural people; thus not much given to travel and with a fairly localised point of view. They see the celestial vault as a hemisphere, the observer of which is at the centre; the sky thus stretches from horizon to horizon, and no further. A visitor from “beyond the sky” is, therefore, simply someone from beyond the horizon. Perhaps, at least in some cases, the same interpretation should be given to alleged ancient UFO encounters.

Visitors from “beyond the sky” are not to be taken as “ancient astronauts / UFO-nauts / bug-eyed monsters”... but simply as strangers from “faraway”.

**Steve Moore**  
London.

## THE ALLIGATOR AT MAIDEN CASTLE

With regard to the stuffed alligator dug up at the Iron Age hill fort at Maiden Castle [FT48, p9]... The curator of the Dorset County Museum in Dorchester, in the 1930s, Colonel Drew, was friendly with Sir Mortimer Wheeler (hence, in part, the choice of our local hillfort for excavation). Drew was also engaged in redistributing the museum’s non-Dorset collection, including the stuffed alligator and a complete set of Samurai armour (sob!) that would finance a whole new gallery if sold these days. There was, in fact, speculation before the English Heritage dig about whether they would find the alligator, whose fate had been handed down as a bit of tradition. I remember it! So there you are!

**Jeremy Harte**  
Dorchester, Dorset.

50 YEARS AGO



# THE FORTEAN SOCIETY MAGAZINE

VOL. 1, No. 1.

SEPTEMBER, 1937

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## SOMETHING IN THE SKY

The Chatham, Mass., station of the Radio-marine Corp., said (7-22-37) it picked up a message from the American freighter *Scan-mail* which said it had picked up a message signed G S V P, the radio call letters of the British freighter *Ranee*, to the effect that a "plane" had been sighted at 9:04 P.M., E.D.T., 500 miles off Cape Race, N. F., 47:10 N., 44:10 W.

A check by "aviation authorities" of the United States and Canada could not identify plane or flier and did not reveal any planes missing.

The message said that "navigation lights" were visible but that identification numbers were not. Whether colored lights are really all that was observed and if the *Ranee* assumed lights in the air to be a plane is not stated in the newspapers. Attempts to check with the crew of the *Ranee* established that that ship was in the West Indies!

The following notes are all from the British Daily Telegraph 7-20-37 to 7-31-37.

The Air ministry continues its inquiries into the mysterious "stunt flight" over Hendon aerodrome in the middle of the night. Some say the visitor has been there before. There is no record of any plane leaving the ground near the time or the place of the incident.

(This item is typical of much that Fort records. *Something* in the air—Orthodoxy explains without evidence—"a stunt flight."

## SEA MONSTERS

There is no such animal as a sea "serpent" until (8-13-37) one is lashed to the side of a boat after a forty-eight hour battle—involving guns and harpoons—and *offered for sale*. Described as 34 feet long, finless, but possessed of "several" pairs of 4-foot long "clippers," tail 9 feet in extreme width, mouth 3 feet 8 inches across—extends 9 feet from tip of snout. Not a whale and "does not fit the description of any known fish." Address Earl Noble, Captain, Motor-ship *Golda*, Fortune Harbor, Newfoundland.

George Weeks wrote to the New York *Sun* (8-5-37) describing a sea monster he recalls from his youth: "... eighty feet in length, five feet in diameter, a cow-shaped head, jet black body, with a bright orange colored stripe full length about the center of the body and a vivid green strip directly under it, orange colored fins on the back, green underneath and a large coarse tuft of orange colored hair drooping down over the mouth and chin." (Sounds like a C.I.O. organizer as seen in a nightmare by Girdler.) Observed from the Coast Guard station in Tully, County Galway, Ireland.

## NUTS NEXT

Mr. and Mrs. William H. De Frehn of Saratoga Springs, N. Y. report (7-24-37) that what was a pear tree last year is bearing cherries this year.



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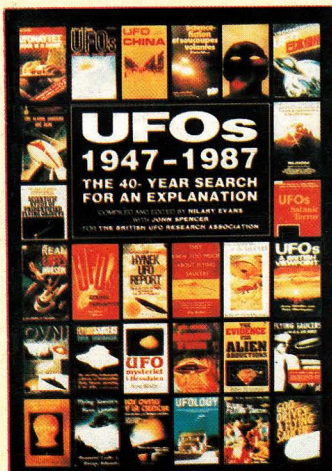
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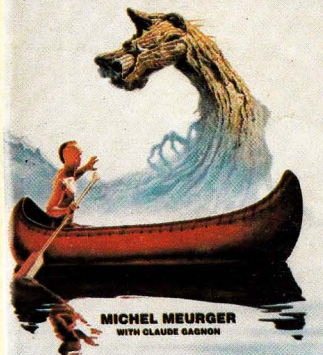
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